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THE
MINOR PROPHETS,
VOL. 2.

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THE

MINOR PROPHETS,

TRANSLATED FROM THE HEBREW TEXT, AND A

COMMENTARY,

CRITICAL, PHILOLOGICAL, AND EXEGETICAL,

BY

A. ELZAS,

Translator of the *Proverbs*, *Job*, *Hoshea*, and *Joel*, Author of
"An Abridged Scripture History."

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BY

THE AUTHOR.

THE

MINOR PROPHETS,

VOL. II.

INTRODUCTION.

Amos (Heb. עָמוֹס *burden*, a word purely Hebrew, and not of Egyptian origin, and the same as Amasis or Amosis, as Gesenius conjectures), was, as we learn from the inscription, a native of Tekoa, a small town in the tribe of Judah, at the distance of about twelve miles south-east of Jerusalem. The country round being sandy and barren, was destitute of cultivation, and fit only to be occupied by those addicted to pastoral life. Among these our prophet was originally found; and, though it was counted no disgrace in ancient times, any more than it is at the present day in Arabia to follow this occupation, kings themselves being found in it (2 Kings, iii., v. 4), yet there is no reason to suppose that Amos belonged to a family of rank or influence, but the contrary. No mention is made of his father; but too much stress is not to be laid upon this circumstance. That he had been in poor circumstances, however, appears from the statement made chapter vii., v. 14; from which also it is incontrovertible, that no change of circumstances intervened, which may be supposed to have been more favourable to mental culture, but that he was called at once to exchange the life of a *shepherd* for that of a *prophet*.

Though a native of the kingdom of Judah, he discharged the functions of his office in that of Israel—a act which is to be accounted for, not, as Bertholdt conjectures, on the ground of some personal relations, but by an express Divine commission to occupy it as the scene of his labours. Eichhorn ingeniously supposes the reasons of his selection to have been, that the appearance of a foreign prophet was much more calculated to excite attention than that of a native, and that such a prophet was more likely to command respect than any belonging to a kingdom in which impostors and fanatics abounded.

The time at which he prophesied is stated in general terms, chapter i., v. 1, to have been in the reigns of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam II., king of Israel, the former of whom reigned B.C. 811-759, and the latter B.C. 825-784, but in which of these years he was called to the office, and how long he continued to exercise it, we are not told. Even if any dependence could be placed upon Josephus (Antiq. ix., 10, 4), and Jerome (on Amos i., v. 1), that the earthquake mentioned here, and Zech. xiv., v. 5, took place when Uzziah attempted to usurp the sacerdotal functions, we should still be unable to fix the exact date, since it is uncertain in what year the attempt was made.

That he was contemporary with Hoshea, appears not only from the dates assigned in both their books, but from the identical state of affairs in the kingdom of the ten tribes, which they so graphically

describe. Whether he flourished also in the days of Isaiah and Micah cannot be determined.

As we have already found from the prophecy of Hoshea, idolatry, with its concomitant evils, effeminacy, dissoluteness, and immoralities of every description, reigned with uncontrolled sway among the Israelites in the reign of Jeroboam, the son of Joash. It is chiefly against these evils that the denunciations of Amos are directed.

The book may properly be divided into three parts :

First : Sentences pronounced against the Syrians, the Philistines, the Phœnicians, the Edomites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, Judah, and Israel, chapters i. and ii.

Second : Special discourses delivered against Israel, chapters iii.-vi.

Third : Visions, partly of a consolatory, and partly of a comminatory nature, in which reference is had to the times that were to pass over the ten tribes, chapters vii.-ix.

In point of style, Amos holds no mean place among the prophets. The declaration of Jerome, that he was *imperitus sermone*, has not been justified by modern critics. On the contrary, it is universally allowed that, though destitute of sublimity, he is distinguished for perspicuity and regularity, embellishment and elegance, energy and fulness. His images are mostly original, and taken from the natural scenery with which he was familiar ; his rythmus is smooth and flowery ; and his parallelisms are in a high degree natural and complete. In description, he is for the most part special and local ; he excels in the minuteness of his groupings, while the general vividness of his manner imparts a more intense interest to all that he delivers. In some few instances, as in chapters iv., vi., and vii., the language approaches more to the prose style, or is entirely that of a narrative.

From chapter vii., vv. 10-13, it appears that the scene of his ministry was Bethel. Whether he left that place in consequence of the interdict of Amaziah, the priest, we know not. According to Pseudo-Epiphanius, he afterwards returned to his native place, where he died, and was buried with his fathers ; but no dependence can be placed on the statement.

AMOS.

CHAPTER I.

1. The words of Amos—who was among the shepherds of Tekoa—which he saw concerning Israel, in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and in the days of Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel, two years before the earthquake.

1.—*The Words of Amos.*—With the exception of the Book of Jeremiah, that of Amos is the only one of the prophets commencing with דברי "dibre," *the words of.*—The meaning is, the subjects or matters of oracular communication which he was employed by the prophetic spirit to deliver, and which were now under the influence of the same spirit committed to writing. Their divine origin is clearly determined by what is added: אשר חזה "asher chaza," *which he saw*, i.e., which were supernaturally presented to his mental vision.—*Among the shepherds.*—The preposition ב in בנקדים "bannok'dim," does not denote distinction, intimating that Amos was greater in point of wealth or respectability than the rest of the shepherds, as Kimchi would have it, but simply that he was of their number; he belonged to their condition of life, and followed their occupation. Compare for a similar usage I Samuel, xix., v. 24; Psalm cxviii., v. 7. נקד "Noked," occurs only here, and II Kings, iii., v. 4. By some it is supposed to denote the shepherd or keeper of a species of sheep and goats, distinguished by certain marks, and to be derived from "Nakad," *to prick, or mark with punctures*, and so to distinguish by such marks.—*Of Tekoa.*—The ruins of Tekoa, Arab. *Tekû'a*, Dr. Robinson found covering an extent of four or five acres on an elevated hill, not steep, but broad at the top, about two hours distant from Bethlehem. On approaching it, he describes the landscape as rocky and sterile, yet rich in pasturage, as was testified by the multitudes of the flocks (Palestine II., pp. 181-182). The surrounding region, especially that in the direction of the Dead Sea, is called מדבר תקוע "Midbar Tekoa," II Chronicles, ii., v. 20. In this pasturing district, our prophet originally tended his flocks, and collected the sycamore figs.—*In the days of Uzziah.*—For the dates here specified, see the introduction. The prophecy is specially directed against Israel, or the kingdom of the ten tribes, though that of Judah, and likewise several foreign states, are also expressly denounced.—*Two years before the earthquake.*—We possess no data

2. And he said:
The Lord roareth from Zion,
And uttereth his voice from Jerusalem;
The pastures of the shepherds mourn,
And the summit of the Carmel withereth.
3. Thus saith the Lord:
For three transgressions of Damascus,
And for four, I will not reverse it;
Because they threshed Gilead with sledges of iron;

by which to fix the year in which the earthquake, here mentioned, occurred. Zechariah, chapter xiv., v. 5, refers to it as having happened in the days of Uzziah, but he does not specify the year. According to Josephus, it took place on occasion of the invasion of the sacerdotal office by that monarch, Antiq. ix., 10, 4. As earthquakes are by no means uncommon in Palestine, it must have been unusually severe to entitle it to the speciality of reference here employed. Some interpret רעש "ra'ash" of a civil commotion, but without sufficient ground, as the connexion Zechariah xiv., 4-5 shows.

2.—*Roareth.*—שאג "Sha'ag," commonly employed to express the roaring of the lion, is here used to set forth the awful character of those judgments.—*Zion.*—Zion, or Jerusalem, being the central point of the theocracy, was the special residence of the Lord, to whom the judgments afterwards denounced, are in highly figurative language, immediately referred.—Dathe, stumbling at the boldness of the figure, renders: *Jova ex Zione dira pronunciat;* thereby destroying the poetical force of the language. Comp. Jer. xxv., v. 30; Job xxxvii., v. 4.—*The summit of the Carmel.*—Michaelis, Justi, and others, take to be the Carmel, now called by the Arabs *Kurmul*, which lies near Yutta or Yuttah, between two and three hours to the south of Hebron; but though the mountainous region about that place was more in the proximity of the prophet, yet the established scripture reference to the fertility of the celebrated Mount Carmel in the tribe of Asher seems to entitle the latter to the preference. In fact, there does not appear to be any mountain deserving the name in the hill country of Judah. The hill of Maon, which is close by, is not less than two hundred feet higher than the site of the ruins of the Castle of Kurmul. See Robinson, *ut sup.* pp. 193-200. Besides the identical phrase ראש הכרמל "rosh hakkarmel," *the summit of the Carmel*, which again occurs ch. ix., v. 3, in immediate connexion with the sea, is employed in application to the Western Carmel, I Kings, xviii., v. 42.

3.—Here begins a series of minatory predictions against different states, which extends to ch. ii., v. 8, where it merges in a continued denunciation of judgments directed almost exclusively against the Israelites. Instead of proceeding at once to charge the ten tribes with the flagrant evils of which they had been guilty, Amos commences with the Syrians, and, after exposing their wickedness,

and that of the Philistines, the Phœnicians, the Edomites, the Ammonites, the Moabites, and the Israelites, he comes to his proper subject, on which he dwells throughout the rest of the book. Having roused the indignation of those among whom he prophesied against sin as exhibited in others, he charges it home upon themselves. Each of the eight predictions is ushered in by the solemn "thus saith the Lord," and consists, in part, in a repetition of the same symmetrical stanzas, with an intermixture of matter, varying according to the nature of the subjects treated of. Interpreters differ in regard to the precise meaning of the use made by our prophet of the numerals *three* and *four*. Similar formulæ are frequent in Hebrew. See Exod. xx., v. 5; Job v., v. 19, xxxiii., v. 14, 29; Prov. xxx., v. 15, 18, 21; Eccles. xi., v. 2; Isa. xvii., v. 6; Mic. v., v. 4. See the passionate exclamation of Ulysses, in the storm, Odyss. lib. v. 306:—

> "*Thrice happy* Greeks! and *four times*, who were slain,
> In Atreus' cause, upon the Trojan plain."

which words *Virgil* translates, and puts in the mouth of his hero in similar circumstances, Æn. I. 93:—

> "Struck with unusual fright, the Trojan chief
> With lifted hands and eyes invokes relief.
> And *thrice*, and *four times happy* those, he cried,
> That under Ilion's walls before their parents died."

Other poets use the same form of expression. So Seneca in *Hypolit.* Act II., 694:—

> "O *thrice* and *four times* happy were the men
> Whom hate devour'd, and fraud hard pressing on,
> Gave as a prey to death."

And so the ancient oracle quoted by *Pausanias*, Achaic. lib. vii., c. 6:—

> "Those men shall be *thrice* and *four times* happy."

These quotations are sufficient to shew that this form of speech is neither infrequent nor inelegant, being employed by the most correct writers of antiquity.

The notion, that the two numbers are to be added, so as to bring out the perfect number *seven*, and thus to express the completeness or full measure of the iniquity, is not born out by Hebrew usage. That the numbers are to be taken literally, as in Prov. xxx., where there is an enumeration of each of the particulars, is equally out of the question; the specification of the prophet being, in each case, limited to a single act of wickedness. Nor can the construction be admitted: "I have not punished Damascus, etc., on account of three transgressions, but on account of a fourth I will punish her," since לא אשיבנו "lo ashibenu," obviously connects with both numerals. The only satisfactory mode of explication is, to regard the phrase as intensively proverbial, and designed to express multiplied or repeated delinquencies, of which the last, as the most atrocious, is uniformly described. The noun to which the suffix in "Ashibenu" relates, is not expressed either before or after the verb, on the principle, that the subject referred to would naturally suggest itself to the mind of the reader. It is anticipative of the sentence of punishment

4. Therefore I will send a fire into the house of Hazael,
And it shall devour the palaces of Ben-hadad.
5. I will break also the barrier of Damascus,
And cut off the inhabitants from the valley of Aven,
And him that holdeth the sceptre from Beth-Eden,
And the people of Syria shall go captive to Kir,
Saith the Lord.

delivered in the following verses.—*I will not reverse it.*—Bp. Lowth proposes to render: "I will not restore it;" but without sufficient authority. In the phrase, "I will not reverse," is a litotes—the meaning being, "I will certainly execute." Damascus, as the metropolis, is put for the kingdom of Syria. The cruel treatment of the inhabitants of Gilead here referred to, is that to which they were subjected by Hazael and Ben-hadad, II Kings, x., vv. 32-33 xiii., vv. 3-7, both of which princes Amos mentions by name, verse 4. It consisted in their being thrown before the threshing sledges, the sharp teeth of iron in the rollers of which tore and mangled their bodies. Gilead comprehended the whole of the territory beyond the Jordan, belonging to the tribes of Reuben and Gad, and the half tribe of Mannasseh; and as it bordered on the kingdom of the Syrians, was particularly exposed to their attacks.

4.—The Ben-hadad here mentioned was the son and successor of Hazael, and not the king of that name whom Hazael succeeded, comp. II Kings viii., vv. 7, 15, with xiii., vv. 3, 24. A similar prediction was afterwards delivered by Jeremiah, ch. xlix., v. 27, from which and from Hosh. ch. viii., v. 14, it is evident that the phraseology employed by Amos here, and verses 7, 10, 12, 14, ch. ii., vv. 2, 5, is not peculiar to that prophet.

5.—*From the valley of Aven.*—According to the testimony of a native, whom Michaelis consulted, there is a most delightful valley called *Oon*, about four hours distant from Damascus, towards the desert, which has given rise to a proverb: "Have you ever been in the valley of Oon?" meaning, Have you ever been in a place of delight? As, however, this has not been confirmed by any traveller, most expositors are inclined to refer the place or what is otherwise called "the valley of Lebanon," *el Bukâ'a*, between the ridges of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. Here are the celebrated ruins of the temple of Baalbec, the Syrian Heliopolis.—*Beth-Eden.*—In all probability, the locality in the mountains of Lebanon, where the royal family had a palace, and where one of its members usually resided. The name is still given to a delectable valley to the west of Damascus. By קיר "Kir," is meant the river and region of the Cyrus in Iberia, now called *Kur*. The version of the lxx. is here extremely faulty, as the slightest comparison with the original will show.

6. Thus saith the Lord:
For three transgressions of Gaza,
And for four, I will not reverse it;
Because they effected a complete captivity,
To deliver them up to Edom.
7. Therefore I will send a fire upon the wall of Gaza,
And it shall devour her palaces;
8. And I will cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod,
And him that holdeth the sceptre from Ashkelon;
And I will turn my hand against Ekron,
And the remnant of the Philistines shall perish,
Saith the Lord God.

6.—*Gaza.*—Gaza was the southernmost of the five principal cities of the Philistines, which formed the capitals of so many satrapies of the same names. It was situated at the distance of about an hour's journey from the south-east coast of the Mediterranean, from which it was separated by low hills and tracks of sand. It was built upon a hill, and strongly fortified, as the name imports. The modern city is built partly on the hill, but mostly on the plain below; and according to Dr. Robinson, contains a population of about 15,000 souls. It must have been a place of high antiquity, for its name occurs in the genealogical table, Gen. x.; and it occupied so commanding a position, that it formed the key to Palestine on the south. It stands here by Synecdoche for the whole of Philistia. —*A complete captivity.*—See II Chron. xxviii., v. 18. The capture was indiscriminate and universal; none escaped. What aggravated the guilt of the Philistines was, that they did not treat the Jewish nation as prisoners of war, but sold them as slaves to the Edomites, who were their bitterest enemies, and would treat them with the utmost cruelty. They were doubtless conveyed to Petra, the great emporium of commerce, and there sold to such as might purchase them. Comp. Joel iii., vv. 4-6.

7.—*Fire.*—Metaphorically used for *war*, in carrying on which, however, it is often employed as one of the most destructive elements.

8.—Three others of the principal cities of the Philistines are now threatened. The reason why *Gath*, the remaining city of the five, is not mentioned, is assigned by Kimchi to be, its having been already subdued by David; but as it was afterwards occupied both by the Syrians, II Kings xii., v. 17, and the Philistines, II Chron. xxvi., v. 6, it seems more natural to refer its omission to the fact of its reduction by Uzziah, in the days of our prophet, as narrated in the latter of the above passages. It is also omitted Zeph. ii., vv. 4-5. In which of the reductions of the Philistines, the prediction received its fulfilment, we cannot determine. One of these took place during the reign of Uzziah, II Chron. xxvi., vv. 6, 7; another in that of Hezekiah, II Kings xviii., v. 8; they were afterwards successively

9. Thus saith the Lord:
For three transgressions of Tyre,
And for four, I will not reverse it;
Because they delivered up a complete captivity to Edom,
And remembered not the covenant of the brethren.
10. Therefore I will send a fire upon the wall of Tyre,
And it shall devour her palaces.
11. Thus saith the Lord:
For three transgressions of Edom,
And for four, I will not reverse it;
Because he pursued his brother with the sword,
And did violence to his pity,
And his anger tore continually,
And as for his wrath, he retained it for ever.

reduced by Psammeticus, King of Egypt, by Nebuchadnezzar, by the Persians, by Alexander, and ultimately by the Asmoneans.

9.—A similar charge is here brought against the Phœnicians, with a superadded aggravation of a breach of ancient faith. Comp. Joel iii., vv. 4-6. The ברית אחים "b'rith achim," *covenant of brethren*, includes the terms of friendship and mutual assistance which were agreed upon between David and Hiram, II Sam. v., v. 11; and afterwards between Solomon and the same monarch, I Kings v.

11.—The guilt of the cruelties exercised by the Idumeans upon the Israelites was greatly aggravated by the circumstance of their original relationship, Obad. 10, and the unrelenting perpetual character of their hatred.—*Violence to his pity.*—Lit. *to spoil*, or *destroy compassions; i.e.*, so to repress all the tender feelings of pity, as to become hardened against objects of distress. The Sept., Arab., Doederlein, Dathe, and others take רחמים "rachamim," in the sense of רחם "rechem," *the womb*, and explain it either *of pregnant females*, or *the fruit of the womb, i.e.*, children; but the plural is never used in this acceptation.—*And he retained.*—The ה in שמרה "shemarah," is generally considered to be an instance of a paragogic in the third person, but it is preferable to construe it as the pronominal feminine affix, agreeing with עברה "ebrah" in the nominative absolute. The absence of the Mappic forms no objection, as there are several instances of its omission where we might have expected it. The accent on the penultimate favours this construction, being occasioned solely by the absence of the Mappik. The verb, to be taken feminine, must be pointed "shamerah," but this would require "ebrah" to be the subject instead of the object, which would be intolerably harsh. Comp. for the sentiment, and as elliptical form of the phraseology, Jer. iii., v. 5. The Hebrews speak of *keeping* a quality, whether good or bad, when they would express its prolonged or continued exercise. See Neh. ix., v. 32; Dan. ix., v. 4.

12. Therefore I will send a fire into Teman,
And it shall devour the palaces of Bozrah.
13. Thus saith the Lord:
For three transgressions of the sons of Ammon,
And for four, I will not reverse it;
Because they ripped up the pregnant women of Gilead,
That they might enlarge their border.
14. Therefore I will kindle a fire upon the wall of Rabbah,
And it shall devour the palaces thereof;
With war-cry in the day of battle,
With a tempest in the day of the storm.

12.—*Teman.*—That "Teman" was a city, seems evident from its being mentioned along with Bozrah. Though Jerome speaks of it as a *region*, he mentions, in his Onomasticon, a town of this name, at the distance of five miles from Petra. On the map of Burckhardt and Grimm, it is placed to the south of Wady Mûsa. It was doubtless the principal place in the district inhabited by the descendants of Teman, one of the grandsons of Esau, Gen. xxxvi., vv. 11, 15, who were celebrated on account of their superior wisdom, Jer. xlix., v. 7. Comp. Obad., v. 8, 9, and Baruch iii., v. 22. The reason why no mention is made of Sela, or Petra, Credner thinks is to be found in the fact, that it had already been captured by Amaziah, II Kings, xiv., v. 7, of whose conquests in that direction advantage was taken by his son Uzziah, v. 22; II Chron. xxvi., v. 2.

13.—The Ammonites, descendants of Lot, Gen. xix., v. 3, occupied the territory on the east of the Jordan, between the rivers Jabbok and Arnon, but more in the direction of the Arabian desert. That portion of country which lay along the Jordan, of which they had possessed themselves originally belonged to the Amorites, which accounts for its being given to the tribe of Gad, Josh. xiii., v. 25. They frequently annoyed the Hebrews, but were repelled by David and several of his successors. For the sake of plunder they joined the Chaldeans on their invasion of Judea; and even after the captivity, they evinced the same hostile disposition. They were severely chastised by Judas Maccabeus.

14.—*Rabbah.*—The metropolis of the country of the Ammonites, the extensive ruins of which have recently been discovered by Seetzen and Burckhardt on the banks of the river *Moiet Amman*, which empties itself into the Jabbok. The full form of the name was רבת בני עמון "rabbath b'ne Ammon," Deut. iii., v. 11, by which it was distinguished from Rabbah of Moab, and a city of the same name in the tribe of Judah.—*With shouting.*—By תרועה "t'ruah" is meant the tremendous shout which eastern armies give at the commencement of battle, partly to excite their courage, and partly to strike terror into the enemy. Comp. Exod. xxxii., v. 17; Josh. vi., vv. 5, 20.

15. And their king shall go into captivity,
He and his princes together,
Saith the Lord.

CHAPTER II.

1. Thus saith the Lord:
For three transgressions of Moab,
And for four, I will not reverse it;
Because they burned the bones
Of the king of Edom into lime.
2. Therefore I will send a fire into Moab,
And it shall devour the palaces of Kerioth;
And Moab shall die with tumult,
With war-cry, with the sound of the trumpet;

15.—*Their king.*—The Syr. and Vulg. have understood this of *Moloch*, an idol of the Ammonites and Moabites; but the Sept. and Targum support the common rendering, which שָׂרָיו "sarov," *his princes*, following, would seem absolutely to require. It is true, this term might be taken figuratively to signify *priests*, as in Isa. xliii., v. 28; and such interpretation might appear to be countenanced by the occurrence of כֹּהֲנָיו "Kohanov," *his priests*, in the parallel prophecy of Jeremiah, ch. xlix., v. 3; but the use of "sarov," *his princes*, immediately after by that prophet, shows that, if the former term be not an interpolation, it denotes the idolatrous priests who were in attendance upon the king, just as the princes were the chiefs and civil officers about the court.

1.—*Moab.*—The land of the Moabites lay to the east of the Dead Sea. For the origin of this people, see Gen xix., v. 37.—The particular act here charged against the Moabites is nowhere recorded. Michaelis is of opinion, that reference is had to II Kings, iii., v. 27; but the prince there spoken of was the son of the King of Moab, and not the future heir to the Idumean throne. The wickedness appears to have consisted in a wanton violation of the sanctity of the tomb, by the disinterment and burning of the royal remains. It was indicative of an enmity which was not satisfied with inflicting every possible injury upon its victim while living, but pursued him even into the regions of the dead!—*Burned the bones.*—To exhume, burn, and disperse the bones of the dead has often been adopted as a way of shewing indignity.

2.—*Kerioth.*—Targum: כַּרְכָּא "keracca," *the fortress* or *citadel*; in all probability, the chief city, elsewhere called קִיר מוֹאָב "Kir-Moab," and here put in the plural, to describe its size, or appearance, as comprehending more than one. Comp. Jer. xlviii., v. 24.

3. And I will cut off the judge from her midst,
And will slay all her princes with him,
Saith the Lord.
4. Thus saith the Lord:
For three transgressions of Judah,
And for four, I will not reverse it;
Because they have despised the law of the Lord,
And have not kept His statutes;
And their false gods have caused them to err,
After which their fathers walked.
5. Therefore I will send a fire into Judah,
And it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem.
6. Thus saith the Lord:
For three transgressions of Israel,
And for four, I will not reverse it;
Because they sold the righteous for silver,

3.—*The judge.*—From the circumstance that שופט "shophet," *judge*, and not מלך "meleck," *king*, is selected to describe the chief magistrate of Moab, it has, not without reason, been supposed, that, at the time the prophet wrote, or, at least, at the time to which his prophecy refers, a change had taken place in the government of that country; but whether it was occasioned by the extinction of the royal house, or the appointment of a ruler by a foreign power, it is impossible to decide.

4.—The charges brought against Judah differ from any of the preceding, in the crimes which they involve having been committed directly against God, and not against man. They had become weary of his service, abandoned his worship, and addicted themselves to idolatrous practices. Between the synonymes here employed, there is this difference of meaning: תורה "torah," *law*, stands for the institute of Moses generally, of which the moral code formed the basis; חקים "chukkim" *statutes*, for the ceremonial and judicial enactments.—*False gods.*—Literally: *lies*. Idols were so called because their pretensions and oracles were founded on falsehood, and because they deluded with false hopes those who worshipped them.

6.—The prophet, having secured the attention of the Israelites by his predictions against those communities which they regarded with feelings of hostility, comes now to his proper subject, which was to charge upon themselves the guilt which, in various ways, they, as a people, had contracted.—*Israel.*—The *Israelites* consisted, after the revolt in the time of Rehoboam, of the ten tribes, whose capital was Samaria, and whose worship, originally that of God, under the visible image of the golden calves, speedily merged in the basest and most licentious idolatry.—*They sold.*—According to Rashi

And the poor for a pair of sandals;
7. Who bruise the head of the poor in the dust,
And turn aside the way of the afflicted;
And a man and his father go in to the same damsel,
To profane my holy name.
8. They stretch themselves upon pledged garments,
Near every altar;
And drink the wine of the amerced
In the house of their gods.
9. Yet it was I that destroyed the Amorite before them,

and others, the reference is to the conduct of a corrupt judge, who for money gives a verdict against the innocent; but the term מכר "machar," *to sell*, is never used to express such an act. It may therefore refer to the selling of a person into slavery.—*For a pair of sandals.*—Sandals are greatly inferior in value to shoes, consisting merely of soles of leather or wood, fastened by two straps to the feet, one of which passes over the forepart of the foot, near the great toe, and the other round the ankle. They even deprived the poor of their liberty for the most paltry considerations.

7.—*Who cruise.*—Commentators differ as to the meaning of this part of the verse. I have followed Houbigant, as being from שוף "shuph," who found in several MSS. the ש marked with a circle above it, as a suspicious letter. Dr. Henderson's comment, viz.: "that the persons whom the prophet describes were so avaricious, that after having robbed others of their property, they even begrudged them the small quantity of dust which they had cast on their heads in token of mourning," is certainly far from the mark. I prefer the rendering of Fuerstenthal, which, however, is a free rendering: "Gierig nach des elenden Akker, trachten sie des Armen nach dem Leben."—*And turn aside.*—Turn any one out of his right course, into a trackless region, where he can expect nothing but inconvenience, perplexity and danger.

8.—*Upon pledged garments.*—To retain pledged raiment over night was expressly prohibited by the Mosaic law, Exod. xxii., vv. 26-27, as it deprived the owner of his covering: to stretch oneself upon it in an idol's temple was a great aggravation of the crime.—*Near every altar.*—It was not unusual for the heathen to sleep near the altars of their gods, that they might obtain communications in dreams; but as it was customary to eat in a recumbent posture, the *stretching* here referred to would rather seem to have respect to participation in idolatrous feasts, expecially as the drinking of wine in the temples is specified in the following line.—*The wine of the amerced.*—Wine purchased with money enacted by the imposition of fines.

9.—*Yet it was I.*—What a contrast between the Divine conduct and that of the Israelites! The signal benefits which, as a nation,

Whose height was as the height of the cedars,
And who was strong as the oaks;
I destroyed his fruit above,
And his roots beneath.
10. Also I brought you up from the land of Egypt,
And led you in the desert forty years,
That ye might possess the land of the Amorite.
11. And I raised up of your sons to be prophets,
And of your young men to be Nazarites,
Is it not even so, O ye children of Israel?
Saith the Lord.

they had received from the Lord, ought to have attached them for ever to his service.—*The Amorites* are here taken in a wide sense, as including all the inhabitants of Canaan, on account of their being the largest and most powerful of the nations which occupied that country. Comp. Gen. xv., v. 16. In a more special point of view, they inhabited both sides of the Jordan, and particularly the mountains afterwards possessed by the tribe of Judah, in respect of their gigantic height and extraordinary strength, to which reference is frequently made in the history of the Hebrews, they are here beautifully compared to cedars and oaks. The cedar is the typical Eastern tree for height; the oak for strength, from which indeed it has its Hebrew name. The Hebrew as well as the profane poets often compare men to trees. Comp. Ps. xxxvii., v. 35, xcii., vv. 12-15; Isai. x., vv. 33-34; Ezek. xvii., v. 3.—*Before them.*—Several Hebrew MSS. read מִפָּנֵיכֶם "mipnechem," before *you*, instead of מִפָּנֵיהֶם "mipnehem," before *them*.

10.—God goes back to still earlier, but no less remarkable displays of his kindness to the nation, showing that from the commencement of its history he had been its benefactor. Comp. Jer. ii., v. 6.—*Brought you up.*—עָלָה "'Alah," *to come* or *go up*, is always used in Hebrew in reference to local or political elevation, and not, as Rosenmüller asserts, to the North. The circumstance that many of the regions or places to which persons are said to have gone up, lay to the North of those from which they came, is purely accidental; whereas the propriety of the use of the term lies in the fact of the mountainous character of the land of Canaan, while Egypt and the intervening regions were low and flat.

11.—The prepositive מ in מִבְּנֵיכֶם "mibb'nechem," is partitive, indicating that some or certain persons out of the number were selected.—*Nazarites.*—The Nazarites were a class of persons among the Hebrews who ordinarily bound themselves by a voluntary vow to abstain either for a time, or for the whole period of life, from wine and all intoxicating liquors, and everything made of the produce of the vine; and not to shave their head nor touch any dead body. Sometimes persons were, before their birth, devoted by their parents

12. But ye made the Nazarites drink wine,
And ye charged the prophets,
Saying: "Propheey not."
13. Behold, I will press you down,
As the cart presseth which is full of sheaves.
14. And refuge shall vanish from the swift,
And the strong shall not exert his strength,
Neither shall the warrior deliver himself;
15. He that handleth the bow shall not stand,
Nor shall the swift-footed escape;
Neither shall the horse's rider save his own life.
16. And he that is stout-hearted among the warriors,
Shall flee away naked in that day,
Saith the Lord.

to this abstinence; as in the cases of Samson and Samuel. For the law of the Nazarite see Numb. vi. The object of the institute appears to have been, to exhibit to the view of the nation the power of religious principle operating in the way of self-control, indifference to sensual gratification, and an entire consecration to the service of God. The importance which was attached to it in a moral point of view, is evident from those who thus exercised themselves in self-denial being classed along with the prophets.

12.—What could have been more flagrant than to tempt the pious to break their solemn vow, and attempt to induce the inspired ambassadors of God to withhold the communications of His will?

13.—Here commence the denunciations against Israel.—*I will press you down.*—עוּק "'Uk," occurs only here as a verb; but that it signifies *to press*, is clear from the signification of the derivatives עָקָה "'Akah," Ps. lv., v. 4, and מוּעָקָה "Mu'akah," Ps. lvi., v. 2, as well as from the connexion in which it here occurs. The verb is used transitively in both instances, according to the ordinary signification of Hiphil. There is more force in speaking of a fully laden cart pressing the ground under it, than its being itself pressed by its contents. תַּחַת "Tachath," is to be taken in the sense of *down*, as in Job xl., v. 12. Newcome (and after him Boothroyd) renders: "As a loaded corn-wain presseth its sheaves;" but עָמִיר "'Amir," is the objective case to הֶמְלֵאָה "ham'leah," and not to תָּעִיק "ta'ik." As the object of the verb supply אֶת הָאָרֶץ *the ground*.

14-16.—Every attempt to resist or escape from the evils that were coming upon the nation, would prove utterly fruitless. This sentiment is expressed under various forms, which are obviously accumulated for the sake of effect.

CHAPTER III.

1. Hear ye this word, which the Lord hath spoken concerning you, O children of Israel, concerning the whole family which I brought up out of the land of Egypt, saying:

2. You only have I known
Of all the families of the earth;
Therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.

3. Will two walk together
Except they be agreed?

4. Will a lion roar in the forest
When he has no prey?

1.—*Children of Israel.*—Several Hebrew MSS. read: בית ישראל "*house* of Israel," and so the Sept. and Arab. Both forms are employed in the book of Amos, but the former is the less frequent; which awakens the suspicion that the latter has been introduced here by way of correction. That the phrase is intended to include the whole Hebrew nation, is evident from the words which follow in apposition, and describe the distinguished favour conferred upon the entire race of Jacob.

2.—*Have I known.*— ידע "Yad'a," *to know*, is here employed in the sense of knowing with the idea of volition or goodwill: *to acknowledge, regard, care for*, and by implication, *to show favour to.* The Israelites alone were acknowledged by God as his people, and as such treated with peculiar favour; but in proportion to the distinction which they enjoyed, was the degree of punishment which their ungrateful and rebellious conduct merited.

3.—In this and the three following verses, a series of parabolic interrogations are employed, highly calculated to produce conviction in the minds of those to whom they were addressed. They are familiar indeed, but so much the more appropriate and forcible. Instead of נועדו "Noadu," the Vulg. Sept. and Arab. read: נודעו "Nodau," with apparent reference to the signification of ידע "Yad'a," in the preceding verse. The signification of יעד "Ya'ad," in Niphal is, *to meet by appointment; to do anything by common consent; to be agreed.* This last seems to be the acceptation in which the verb is to be taken in this place; for to render: "How can two set out upon a journey, except they meet by appointment?" would express that to be impossible, which is often true in fact.

4.—The lion is quiet till he sees his prey, but roars at the sight of it, and thereby inspires it with such terror, that it is deprived of the power of escape. In like manner the young lion, which has been weaned, and is just beginning to hunt for prey, will lie silent in his den, till it is brought near, when the smell of it will rouse him from his quiet. Poiret, in his travels in Barbary, (Strasb. 1789, vol.

Will a young lion cry out from his den,
If he have not caught anything?
5. Will a bird fall into a ground-trap
Where there is no snare for her?
Will one take up a trap from the earth
When he makes no capture?
6. Shall a trumpet be blown in a city,
And the people not tremble?
Shall there be evil in a city,
And the Lord have not inflicted it?
7. Surely the Lord God inflicteth nothing,
Unless He have revealed this purpose
To His servants the prophets.

I., page 283) states, that the lion has two different modes of hunting his prey. When not very hungry, he contents himself with watching behind a bush for the animal which is the object of his attack, till it approaches, when, by a sudden leap, he attacks it, and seldom misses his aim; but if he is famished, he does not proceed so quietly, but, impatient and full of rage, he leaves his den, and fills with his terrific roar, the echoing forest. His voice inspires all living beings with fear and dread; no creature deems itself safe in its retreat; all flee, they know not wither, and by this means fall into his fangs.

5.—Between פח "pach," and מוקש "mokesh," there is no essential difference. The sense would have been the same had the latter word been omitted; but the insertion of the synonyme gives morce force to the sentence.

6.—The prophet here closes his interrogatory appeals;—first, by a reference to the effect produced upon the inhabitants of a city by the sounding of the trumpet, as a signal of war; and then, by directly ascribing the infliction of temporal calamities to God, as the punisher of sin. For רעה "ra'ah" in the sense of temporal evil, or calamity, see Gen. xiv., v. 19, xliv., v. 34; Exod. xxxii., v. 14; Ezek, vii., v. 5.

7.—Though the infliction of punishment on his guilty people was determined in his holy and righteous counsel, yet God would not proceed to execute it until he had given them full warning, and afforded such of them an opportunity of escaping as should repent and return to his service. He thus mixed mercy with judgment. —*His purpose.*—סוד "Sod," *counsel, purpose, decree,* from יסד "Yasad," *to found, lay a foundation, establish a plan, ordain.* It is rather, I imagine, on this acceptation of the verb that the idea of *purpose* or *decree* is based, than upon that of a divan, or an assembly of persons, sitting and deliberating on couches; but see Gesenius in סוד "Sod." As the Divine plan or purpose is necessarily secret

8. The lion hath roared, who will not fear?
The Lord God hath spoken, who will not prophesy?
9. Proclaim ye in the palaces of Ashdod,
And in the palaces of the land of Egypt, and say:
Assemble yourselves on the mountains of Samaria,
And behold the great tumults within her,
And the oppressions in the midst of her.
10. For they regard not the practice of rectitude,
Saith the Lord,
That amass rapine and spoil in their palaces.
11. Therefore thus saith the Lord God:
An enemy shall encompass the land;

till it be revealed, hence the acceptation *secret* came to be attached to the word. In this verse a high honour is vindicated to the prophetical office. The holy men of God were, by inspiration, entrusted with a knowledge of the Divine purposes, in so far as it was necessary for them to divulge them to the world.

8.—With reference to what he had expressed verse 4, and in keeping with the mode of representation which he had employed ch. i., v. 2, Amos formally announces the awful character of the message he had heard from the Lord, and the impossibility of withholding the communications.

9.—*Proclaim ye.*—השמיעו "Hashmiu," *cause it to be heard, proclaim ye!* Those are addressed who had intercourse with the places here specified, and had thus an opportunity of conveying the message. *Ashdod* is here used synecdochically for the whole of Philistia. Instead of באשדוד "beashdod," the lxx. have read באשור "beashur" *in Assyria*, which Secker attempts to justify! —*In the palaces.*—Lit.: "*Upon* the palaces." It was, and is still, customary in the East to assemble on the flat roofs of the houses. To the princes and courtiers thus assembled on their palaces, as well as to all within hearing, the invitation was to be conveyed.—*Samaria.* —The Metropolis of the kingdom of Israel, was built on a round hill, near the middle of a large valley, surrounded by mountains on every side, by which it was completely overlooked. From these elevations persons might distinctly see what was done in the city. —*Oppressions.*—Properly the Pahul participle *oppressed*, but is here used as a noun, as in Job xxxv., v. 9; Eccles. iv., v. 1.

10.—*They regard not.*—לא ידעו "Lo-yad'u" is not intended to express simple ignorance, but that state of mind which is hostile to the entertainment of knowledge. The magnates of Samaria, had no regard for the practice of what was just and right.

11.—*An enemy.*—The lxx., who are followed by Aq. and the Arab. preposterously render: *Tyre;* the Syr., Chald.: *tribulation*, which has been adopted in many modern versions. Thus Dathe,

And he shall bring down thy strength from thee,
And thy palaces shall be plundered.

12. Thus saith the Lord:
As the shepherd rescueth from the mouth of the lion
Two legs, or the portion of an ear,
So shall the sons of Israel be rescued,
Who sit in Samaria on the corner of a bed,
And in Damascus on that of a couch.—

Hesselberg, Dahl, and Hitzig. But Newcome, Michaelis, Struensee, Bauer, Rosenmüller, Vater, Noyes, Fuerstenhal, and others translate *enemy*, which better suits the connexion, as it supplies a proper nominative to the verb הוריד "horid" immediately following. After צר "tzar" supply יבא "yabo."—*Strength*.—Whatever Samaria confided in, or made her boast of, such as her treasures, fortifications, warriors, etc., all was to be brought down into the valley, and what was capable of being removed, carried away by the enemy, *i.e.*, Shalmaneser, the king of Assyria.

12.—A very appropriate image is here borrowed from a scene of pastoral life, such as the prophet himself may have witnessed. Nothing but a mere remnant of the Israelites should with difficulty escape from the enemy.—*The portion of an ear*.—There is a species of goat in the East, the ears of which are often a foot in length, and broad in proportion; so that more importance would be attached to them by the shepherd, than would be the case with us in the West. The concluding words of the verse have greatly perplexed interpreters. Most of the moderns explain "dameshek" of the silk stuff manufactured at Damascus, which from the name of the place, is called *damask*, and render: "in damask couches." What has been supposed to confirm this explanation of the term is the occurrence of the same word in Arabic, only with the letters, or similiar letters, transposed, signifying *silk*. Gesenius has a long article on the word in his Thesaurus, p. 346; but fails in establishing the point of identity. Instead of דמשק "dameshek" with *shin*, upwards of twenty MSS. of de Rossi read "damesek" with *sin*, which reading is also that of several printed editions. What appears to have originated the above view of the word was the idea, that as the wealthy and voluptuous inhabitants of Samaria are supposed to be intended, there was a special propriety in adverting to the sumptuousness of the couches or sofas on which they reclined. But this idea is totally alien from the bearing of the passage, which requires something to correspond to what had been expressed in the comparison of the fragments left by the lion. Besides פאה "peah" signifies the *outer* or *extreme* corner, and not the *inner*, which is regarded as the seat of honour, so that the observations of Harmer, ch. vi., Obs. xxx., are totally inapplicable. The words are elliptical, and the parallelism would stand thus:

"Who sit in Samaria on the corner of a bed,
Who sit in Damascus on the corner of a couch."

13. Hear ye, and testify to the house of Jacob,
Saith the Lord God, the God of hosts,
14. That in the day when I shall visit
The transgressions of Israel upon him,
I will also visit the altars of Bethel;
The horns of the altar shall be cut off,
And they shall fall to the ground.
15. I will also smite the winter-house
Together with the summer-house,
The ivory mansions shall perish,
And the great houses shall be destroyed,
Saith the Lord.

CHAPTER IV.

1. Hear ye this word, ye kine of Bashan!
That are on the mountain of Samaria;

The persons referred to are the sick and infirm poor, who had nothing left but the side or part of a couch, and whom the king of Assyria would not think it worth his while to be at the trouble of removing. All the rest, the robust and active, the opulent and powerful, should be carried into captivity. See II Kings, xvii., vv. 5-6, xviii., vv. 9-12. The reason why *Damascus* is mentioned along with Samaria, is, that at the time of the Assyrian invasion, that city was in the power of the Israelites, having been conquered by Jeroboam II. See II Kings, xv., v. 28. On the conquest, no doubt many belonging to the ten tribes went there to reside.

14.—Signal vengeance was to be taken upon the place whence all the evils which spread through the ten tribes originated.—*The horns.*—The קַרְנוֹת "k'ranoth" were four projecting points in the shape of horns at the corners of ancient altars. They may be seen in the representations of those dug up by Belzoni in Egypt. As they were ornamental, the action here described was designed to express to the contempt in which the altar would be held by the Assyrians.

15.—Eastern monarchs and princes, as well as others of the great, have summer as well as winter residences. The latter are in cities and sheltered situations; the former in forests, or upon mountains.—*Ivory mansions.*—Not houses or palaces composed of that material, but richly ornamented with it. The ancients used it for decorating the ceilings, panels, doors, etc. of their rooms, by inlaying it with other costly articles.

1.—Such an address was quite natural from the herdsman of Tekoa.—*Ye kine.*—The proud and luxurious females of Samaria; they are introduced on account of the corrupting influence which, through their husbands, they exerted on the state of public affairs.

That oppress the poor; that crush the needy;
That say to their masters:
"Come bring! and let us drink."

2. The Lord God hath sworn by His holiness:
That, lo, days are coming upon you,
When ye shall be carried away in boats,
And your posterity in fishing boats.

3. And ye shall go out through the breaches,
Each one right before her;
And ye shall be cast into the harem,
Saith the Lord.

4. Go ye to Bethel, and transgress;
At Gilgal, multiply transgressions;

Some commentators, however, maintain that the prophet has the *princes* and *rulers* in view, whom he describes in this debasing language, in order to set forth the effeminacy, wantonness, and obstinacy of their character. Some translators suppress the figurative language altogether, as Dathe: *Audite hoc, vos divites et potentes Samariae*; but such practice is quite unwarrantable, as it destroys the effect of the prophetic mode of representation.—*Bashan.*—Celebrated for the richness of its pasture, and its excellent breed both of large and small cattle, Deut. xxxii., v. 14; Ezek. xxxix., v. 18. It lay on the east of the Jordan, between Hermon and the mountains of Gilead, and extended eastward as far as the cities of Salchah and and Edreï, which are included.—*To their Masters.*—Husbands are often called *Masters*; comp. Gen. xviii., v. 12.—*Come bring, that we may drink.*—In the East it is the custom that *women* go to draw water; but the proud women of Samaria, so it seems from the words of our prophet, told their husbands to bring drink.

2.—*His holiness.*—It is surprising that so judicious an interpreter as Calvin should attempt to vindicate the rendering *his sanctuary*, when that of *his holiness* is so natural and proper. Comp. Ps. lxxxix., v. 36. The nominative to נִשְׁבַּע is the enemy, understood, but as the verb is put in the impersonal form, it is best rendered passively.

3.—*Each one right before her.*—In a captive state, not being permitted by the enemy to turn to the right or the left.—*Harem.*—Of הַהַרְמוֹנָה "haharmonah" almost every possible interpretation has been given. The Targum: "the mountains of Armenia." Michaelis, Struensee, Dathe, Bauer, De Wette: "Armenia." Justi, Hezel, Fuerstenthal, and others: "Harem." Hitzig takes it to be a corruption of *Hadadrimmon*, which he explains of a place near Samaria where Adonis was worshipped. Newcome cuts the knot, and renders: "will utterly destroy it." Kimchi, Gesenius, Winer, and Lee: הרמון "harmon" for אַרְמוֹן "armon," *palace.*

4.—*Go ye.*—The language of these verses is that of the keenest irony.—*Gilgal.*—A place of idolatrous worship; see on Hosh. iv.,

And bring your sacrifices in the morning,
Your tithes every third day.
5. And burn a thank-offering with leaven,
Proclaim the voluntary offering, publish them;
For so ye loved to do, O children of Israel,
Saith the Lord.
6. And though I have given you
Cleanness of teeth in all your cities,
And scarcity of bread in all your places,
Yet ye have not returned unto Me,
Saith the Lord.
7. And though I have withholden from you the rain,
Three months before the harvest;
And have caused it to rain upon one city,
And upon another city have not caused it to rain,
One tract of land was rained upon,
And another whereupon it rained not, withered.

v. 15.—*In the morning.*—See Exod. xxxiv., v. 25.—*Every third day.*—See Lev. vii., v. 17.

5.—*With leaven.*—See the ordinance Lev. ii., v. 2. There is no necessity for attaching to חמץ "chametz," the meaning of *violence*, though Gesenius would justify it, on the ground of "chometz" being used Ps. lxxi., v. 4, to designate an oppressor; and because the rendering of the Chald. in this place is אונם "ones," *rapine* or oppression.

6.—From this verse to the 11th inclusive, God describes the different corrective measures which he had employed for the purpose of effecting a change in the Israelites, and at the close of each mentioned in the series, the obstinate impenitence, under the influence of which they persisted in their wicked courses, is emphatically marked by the declaration, *yet ye have not returned unto me, saith the Lord;* such repetition gives great force to the reprehension.—*Cleanness of teeth.*—Synonymous with חסר לחם "choser lechem," *scarcity of bread;* both expressing the famine with which the nation had been visited.—*Unto me.*—The Chald. paraphrases: לפולחני *to my worship, or service.*

7.—The famine was followed by the judgment of drought, which at once produced sterility, and cut off the necessary supply of drink for man and beast. The rain that had been withheld was the מלקוש "malkosh," which falls in the latter half of February, the whole of March and April, and thus precedes the harvest, as here stated. See on Hosh. vi., v. 3. Instead of תמטיר "timater," the

8. So that two or three cities have had to wander to one city,
To drink water, but were not satisfied,
Yet ye have not returned unto Me,
Saith the Lord.
9. I have smitten you with blight and mildew;
Your many gardens, your vineyards, your fig trees,
And your olive trees, the locust hath devoured;
Yet ye have not returned unto Me,
Saith the Lord.
10. I have sent among you the pestilence
After the manner of Egypt;
Your young men have I slain with the sword,
Together with your captive horses;
And I have made the stench of your camps
To come up even to your own nostrils;
Yet ye have not returned unto Me,
Saith the Lord.
11. I have overthrown some among you—
As God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah—

reading אמתיר "Amtir," is found in some Hebr. MSS., which is also the rendering of the lxx., Arab., and Vulg. The textual reading must be taken impersonally.

8.—*Cities.*—ערים "'Arim," *cities*, stands for their inhabitants. Compare for a lengthened and graphic description of the judgment here specified, Jer. xiv., vv. 1-6.

10.—Though the plague has from time immemorial been endemic in Egypt, and might so far be described as *the way of Egypt;* yet comparing Isa. x., v. 26, in which the same phrase is used as here, it obviously means, *as the Egyptians were treated*, or as God punished them with the plague.—*Your captive horses.*—Lit.: *the captivity of your horses, i.e.*, those taken and destroyed by the enemy. See II Kings, xiii., v. 7.

11.—To what physical phenomena reference is here specifically made, it is impossible to determine, owing to the absence of all historical data. Some think the earthquake, mentioned ch. i., v. 2, is intended; but this is altogether out of the question, since the prophecy was delivered two years before that event. From the allusion to fire, it has been deemed probable, that some of the cities of the Israelites had been burnt, either by lightning, or by the army of the king of Syria. At all events, that the language is not to be understood figuratively is evident from the close connexion of the verse with those preceding, each of which describes a separate

And ye have been as a brand snatched from the burning,
Yet ye have not returned unto Me,
Saith the Lord.

12. Therefore, thus will I do unto thee, O Israel!
And because I will do thus unto thee,
Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel!

13. For, behold! it is He that formeth the mountains,
And createth the wind;
And declareth to man what is His thought;
He that maketh the dawn and the twilight,
And treadeth over the heights of the earth;
The Lord, God of Hosts, is His name.

CHAPTER V.

1. Hear ye this word, which I utter concerning you—
A lamentation, O house of Israel!

physical calamity, and closes, as this one does, with a reprehension of the impenitence by which the nation continued to be characterised. —*A brand snatched from the burning* —A proverbial expression, denoting the narrow escape from utter extinction which had been experienced.

12.—*This will I do.*—I will continue my judgments.—*Prepare.*—Consider how you shall meet, or endure the infliction.

13.—To give full effect to the preceding call, one of the most sublime and magnificent descriptions of God, to be met with in Scripture, is here introduced. The participial form of the five verbs employed by the prophet greatly enhances the beauty of the passage; but it cannot be successfully imitated in a translation.—*And the twilight.*—So the Sept., Arab., and upwards of twenty of Kennicott's MSS.

Utter.—Liter.: "am lifting up," as if to cast it down upon them.—*A lamentation.*—קינה "Kinah" is properly an *elegy*, or song of mourning and lamentation. It consisted of plaintive effusions poured forth by mourning relatives, or by persons hired for the purpose, as funerals; and was distinguished for the tender, pathetic, broken and exclamatory nature of the expressions of which it was composed, as well as the touching features of the subject which they were designed to embody. Of this mode of composition the Hebrew prophets frequently avail themselves, especially Jeremiah, who, besides introducing into several of his prophecies, has left us a whole book of קינות "kinoth," elegies, or lamentations. The prolonged wail which Irish women set up at funerals is called the "keen." This word and the Welsh "cwyno," *to moan*, are apparently akin

2. **The virgin of Israel is fallen,**
She can rise no more;
Prostrate upon her own land,
There is none to raise her up.
3. **For thus saith the Lord God,**
The city that went out by a thousand,
Shall retain but a hundred;
And she that went out by a hundred,
Shall retain but ten to the house of Israel.
4. **For thus said the Lord to the house of Israel:**
Seek ye Me, and ye shall live;
5. **But seek not Bethel,**
Nor go unto Gilgal,
Neither pass over unto Beer-sheba;
For Gilgal shall surely go into captivity,
And Bethel shall come to nought.

to the Hebrew. Some are of opinion that the elegy thus introduced extends to the end of the chapter, but it is far more likely that it consists merely of the plaintive exclamations contained in verse 2. Comp. the beautiful lament of David on the death of Jonathan, II Sam. i., vv. 17-27.

2.—*The virgin of Israel.*—The Israelitish state is called בְּתוּלָה "bethulah," *a virgin*, because it had never been subdued by any foreign prince.

3.—The depopulated state of the country is here affectingly depicted.—*The city.*—This stands by metonymy for its inhabitants. —*That went out.*—For war.

5.—A strong dissuasive from idolatry, derived from the predicted fall of the objects and places of false worship—*Beer-sheba.*—Was situated about 25 geographical miles south of Hebron, on the frontier of the Holy Land towards Idumea, and is still called by the Arabs *Bir-es-sebâ.* Dr. Robinson fell in with its ruins on the north side of a Wady of the same name, but found nothing bearing the marks of high antiquity, except two wells, one of which he ascertained to be 44½ feet in depth to the surface of the water, and the other 42 feet. As it lay in the extreme end south of Palestine, the verb עָבַר "'abar," *to pass over*, or *through*, is most appropriate. From this verse, and from ch. viii., v. 14, it appears to have been a place of idolatrous resort, but wherein the idolatry consisted we are not told.—There is a play upon the word אָוֶן "aven," which is used to denote *wickedness, idolatry, idol, nothing*, etc. What had originally been בֵּית־אֵל "Bethel," *a house of God*, but had by the Israelites been converted into בֵּית־אָוֶן "Beth-aven," *a house of idolatry* (see Hoshea iv., v. 15, x., v. 5) should be reduced to אָוֶן "aven," nothing.

6. Seek ye the Lord, and ye shall live;
Lest He rush, like fire, upon the house of Joseph,
And it devour, and there be none
In Bethel to quench it;
7. Ye that turn justice into wormwood,
And cast righteousness to the ground.
8. Seek Him, that made the Pleiades and Orion;
That turneth death-shade into morning,
And darkeneth the day into night;
That calleth the waters of the sea,
And poureth them out over the earth:
The Lord is His name.
9. That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong,
So that the spoiled shall come upon the fortress.
10. Ye that hate him that reproveth in the gate,
And abhor him that spreadeth uprightly.

6.—*The house of Joseph.*—This is a less frequent designation of the ten tribes, the principal of which was that of Ephraim, the son of Joseph. It occurs several times in the historical books, but only twice besides in the prophets, viz. Obad 18; Zech. x., v. 6. The name *Joseph*, by itself is similarly employed, Amos. v., v. 15, vi., v. 1. Comp. Ezek. xxxvii., v. 16.—*Bethel.*—The Sept., Arab., and one of de Rossi's MSS. read "Beth Yisrael," *the house of Israel*, which reading is adopted by Newcome and Boothroyd. One of Kennicott's MSS. has "Yisrael," *Israel*, which Houbigant, Dathe, and Bauer adopt. Rosenmüller, Dahl, Struensee and others retain the received reading, which is supported by the Targ, Syr., and Vulg.

7.—*Ye that turn.*—The proper place of this verse is after verse 9.

8.—Another sublime description of the Most High, almost verbally identical with that furnished Job ix., v. 9. See my note on that verse. Newcome, following the Targum and Syr., inserts "that have forsaken" at the commencement of the verse, an addition which the text does not require. Before לילה "lay'la" supply ל "lamed," as, indeed, it is in several Hebrew MSS., in both the Soncin. editions; in both of Bomberg, 1518 in the margin, and in the Appendix to Münsters, 1536.—*Calleth the waters.*—According to Kimchi, Rosenmüller and others this is descriptive of rain; according to others of an inundation.

9.—*That strengtheneth.*—Takes the part of the poor and oppressed against the oppressor; and in the course of his providence, sets up the former, and depresses the latter.

10.—Ewald thinks that by *the reprover in the gate*, Amos himself is meant; but it seems to be more natural to interpret the phrase of a magistrate, senator, or judge. Comp. also verse 12.

11. Wherefore, because ye trample upon the poor,
And take from him the tribute of corn:
Though ye have built houses of hewn stone,
Ye shall not dwell in them;
Though ye have planted pleasant vineyards,
Ye shall not drink the wine of them.
12. For I know your manifold transgressions,
And your many aggravated sins:
Ye that afflict the just, that take a bribe,
And turn aside the poor in the gate.
13. Therefore the prudent shall be silent at that time,
For it is an evil time!
14. Seek good, and not evil, that ye may live;
And so, the Lord, God of hosts, shall be with you,
According as ye say.
15. Hate evil, and love good,
And establish justice in the gate;
Perhaps the Lord, God of hosts,

11.—בּשׁם "Boshes" is, in all probability, a faulty orthography of בּסם "boses," the Polal. of בּוּס "bus," *to tread down, trample upon.* De Rossi's Codex 380, reads "bosaschem" with *sin.*—*The tribute.*—מִשְׂאֹת "Maseth," *what is raised,* as a *tax, tribute,* etc., from נשׂא "nasa," *to raise.* Instead of remitting the poor the tax which they were unable to pay, the rulers and proprietors rigidly exacted it, that they might consume it upon their lusts. But in whatever state and luxury they might have lived, and whatever preparations they might be making for further indulgences, God declares that they should not continue to enjoy them.

12.—*That take a bribe.*—כֹּפֶר "Kopher," is most commonly used in the sense of *ransom,* or *price of redemption,* on which account Ewald and some others render it so here; but the close connection in which the whole phrase stands with the perversion of justice, specified in the last clause of the verse, decides in favour of the signification *bribe, bribery,* which the word unquestionably has I Sam., xii., v. 3. The Targum: "the mammon of falsehood." Syr.: "a bribe."

13.—*The prudent shall be silent.*—"When he shall see the punishment coming upon them; for he knows that they have deserved it." RASHI.

14.—Reiterated calls to reformation, in order to ensure the return of Divine favour. Both the style and the sentiments have their parallel in Isai. i., vv. 16-17.—*As ye say.*—They thought that God was with them, and that no evil would befall them.

15.—*Perhaps.*—For the force of the conditional participle, אוּל "ulai," *perhaps,* in such connexion, comp. Gen. xvi., v. 2.

May be gracious unto the remnant of Joseph.

16. Therefore thus saith the Lord, God of hosts, the Lord:

In all the broad places there shall be wailing,
And in all the streets they shall say, Alas! Alas!
They shall call the husbandman to mourning,
And the skilful in lamentation to wailing.

17. And in all the vineyards shall be wailing,
For I will pass through thee, saith the Lord.—

18. Woe unto you that desire the day of the Lord!

Comp. also Joel ii., v. 13, where the same idea is expressed by מי יודע "mi yodeà" *who knoweth?—The remnant of Joseph.*—For this use of the patronymic, see on verse 6.

16.—*Therefore.*—This does not refer to the contents of verses 14-15, but to verses 7, 10, and 12. We may suppose a considerable pause to intervene before verse 16.—*God of hosts, the Lord.*—The position in which אדני "Adonai" is here placed, is altogether unusual; indeed, I am not aware that it is so found in any other passage, yet I would not, with Newcome and Boothroyd, cancel it, on the slender authority of the lxx., Arab., and Syr. It seems rather to have been purposely added, in order to give greater solemnity to the sentence which was to be pronounced.—*Broad places.*—רחבות "Rechoboth," *broad* or *open places*, or *wide streets* in a city; and distinguished from חוצות "chutsoth," which signify *ordinary* or *narrow* streets, such as are common in the East.—*The husbandman.*—The crops would fail, and the ground would be tilled in vain.—*The skilful in lamentation.*—These were mourners by profession, who were hired for the occasion, and sung doleful tunes around the corpse of a deceased person, which they preceded when it was carried to the grave, giving utterance to dismal cries and howlings, beating their breasts, and showing every artificial token of excessive grief. These were the mourners described as going about the streets, Eccles. xii., v. 5. That females were especially employed on such occasions, appears from Jer. ix., vv. 17-19, where נהי "Nehi," is twice used as here by Amos. The same custom obtained among the Greeks and Romans. See Iliad xxiv., 720. See also Horace de Arte Poet. ver. 433. In his edition of Harmer's Observations, vol. iii., p. 42, Dr. A. Clarke gives a description of the ancient funeral solemnities of the Irish, and the translation of a song of wailing prepared for the occasion, which bears a strong resemblance to those used by the Orientals. Comp. Wilkinson's Ancient Egyptians, second series, vol. ii., pp. 402-407.

17.—For God's passing through the land, Comp. Exod. xii., v. 12, 23.

18.—*The day of the Lord.*—The time when His judgments should be inflicted. The Israelites could only have given expression sarcastically to the wish that this day might soon reach them. It was

What is the day of the Lord unto you?
It shall be darkness, and not light!
19. As if a man fled from a lion,
And a bear met him;
Or went into a house, and leaned his hand
On the wall, and a serpent bit him:
20. So is the day of the Lord darkness, and not light;
Even thick darkness, without any brightness.
21. I hate, I despise your festivals,
Neither do I delight in your days of restraint.
22. Though ye offer unto me burnt-offerings,
And meat-offerings, I will not accept them,
Nor regard the peace-offerings of your fatlings.
23. Take thou away from Me the sound of thy songs!
I will not hear the music of thy harps.

an impious daring of God to do His worst. Comp. Isai. v., v. 19, Jer. xvii., v. 15. The prophet tells them that it would be to them a day of unmitigated affliction. The fallacy of every hope of escape is illustrated by two simple, but forcible comparisons, borrowed from the pastoral life.

19.—Bochart regards the language as proverbial, and supports his opinion by two Arabic stories, the one beginning: "A lion, pursuing a man, he took refuge in a tree, in the branches of which a bear having fixed himself, was plucking its fruit," and the other; "A man fled from a lion, and fell into a well, into which the lion went down after him. And there was a bear in the well," etc. Hieroso. lib. III., cap. ix., pp. 810-811. Kimchi tersely expresses the meaning thus: "Ye shall go from one calamity into another." Comp. Job xx., v. 24; Isai. xxiv., v. 18.

20.—*Brightness.*—See my note on Prob. iv., v. 18.

21.—The same aversion from their ceremonial observances which God here expresses, He afterwards employed Isaiah to declare to them, ch. i., vv. 10-15. The two passages are strikingly parallel; only the latter prophet amplifies what is set forth in a more condensed form by Amos. The verbs *I hate, I despise,* follow each other immediately, for the sake of more emphatically expressing the Divine abhorrence.

23.—*Take thou away.*—Liter.: "remove from upon me," conveying the idea of a burden which vexes and annoys the bearer. Isaiah expresses it in full: "They are a burden *upon* me." Comp. further for the force of the compound preposition, Exod. x., v. 28. The music here referred to was that performed at the Hebrew festivals by the Levites, before and during the offering of the sacrifices, and on other public occasions.

24. But let justice roll on like waters,
And righteousness like a mighty stream.
25. Did ye offer unto me sacrifices and meat-offerings,
During forty years in the desert, O house of Israel?—
26. And ye shall carry the shrine of your Moloch,
And Chiun, your image,
And Cochab, your god,
Which ye made for yourselves;
27. And I will send you captive beyond Damascus,
Saith the Lord, whose name is God of hosts.

CHAPTER VI.

1. Woe to them that are at ease in Zion,
And that trust in the mountain of Samaria;

24.—While no direction is given respecting the regulation of the sacrifices, in order that they might be presented in an acceptable manner, a special injunction is imparted in regard to justice and rectitude, on the principle that "to obey is better than sacrifices, and to hearken than the fat of rams," I Sam. xv., v. 22. Prof. Lee: "For judgment rolleth (away) as the waters (roll away), and righteousness (disappears) like the mighty torrent" The verse as thus rendered ill suits the context, and is not in keeping with parallel passages, in which, after a reprehension of hypocritical observances, the moral qualities of truth and righteousness are required. The construction put upon it by Kimchi, Hitzig, and others, that the coming of the Divine judgments is intended, is, for the same reasons, to be rejected.

25.—*Did ye offer.*—Did I tell you to offer sacrifices unto me during the forty years in the desert? See Jer. vii., v. 21.

26-27.—These verses ought to follow immediately after verse 20, and most expositors have altogether misunderstood the verses 25-27, by connecting verse 25 with 26.—*The shrine of your Moloch.*—Rashi, Rosenmüller, and others take סכות "sikkuth," to mean an image, or idol, and render "Sikkuth your king."—*Chium.*—Aben Ezra says: "As for the term *Chiun*, it is known in the Arabic and Persic languages by the name *Kivan*, which is Saturn." Kimchi: "It is the star Saturn, and thus he is called *Kivan* in the Arabic and Persic."

1.—*That are at ease.*—Though chiefly directed against the northern of the two kingdoms, the language of this prophecy is so constructed as to apply to both; and in the present verse express mention is made of the inhabitants of Jerusalem, who resembled those of Samaria in carelessness and carnal security. בטח "Batach" and שאנן "sha'anan" are similarly connected and applied Isai. xxx., vv. 9, 11; so that the rendering of the Sept. "Woe unto them that *des-*

The distinguished men of the first of nations,
To whom the house of Israel come!

2. Pass ye over unto Calneh, and see;
And from thence go ye unto Hamath the great;
Go down also to Gath of the Philistines:
Are they better than these kingdoms?
Are their boundaries greater than yours?

3. Woe to them that put off the evil day,
And bring near the seat of oppression;

4. That lie upon beds of ivory,
And stretch themselves upon their couches;

pise Zion," and adopted by Calmet, Houbigant, Dathe, and Boothroyd, cannot be justified.—*The distinguished men.*—The Hebrew phrase נקב בשם "Nikkab b'shem" *to be marked, distinguished by name,* is always used in reference to persons who had been chosen or designated for some special service, Numb. i., v. 17; I Chron. xii., v. 31, xvi., v. 41; II Chron. xxviii., v. 15, xxxi., v. 19. The term is here employed for the purpose of specifying more particularly the leading men in the two kingdoms, whose profligacy and irreligion pre-eminently aggravated the national guilt.—*Of the first of nations.*—By ראשית הגוים "reshith haggoyim," we are not, with Newcome, to understand "the chief of the idolatrous nations," and that the persons spoken of were called after them, but the Hebrew nation, which is so called because it was the *principal,* or most distinguished of all the nations of the earth: having been constituted the peculiar people of God, and possessing laws and privileges unknown to any other. Comp. Numb. xxiv., v. 20, where the reference is to the distinguished place which the Amalekites held among the nations of Canaan.—*To whom.*—The people of Israel were in the habit of going up to their princes and leaders for the decision of differences, etc. They exerted an influence over the entire people.

2.—*Better—greater.*—If these kingdoms are not better and greater than yours, why do ye worship *their* gods, and forsake the *true* God?

3.—*That put off.*—The persons addressed could not bear the idea that the period of threatened punishment was impending; they endeavoured as much as possible to keep it out of view. Comp. Ezek. xii., vv. 21-28.—*And bring near.*—I retain the rendering of the A.V. Thus Hitzig and Ewald. The meaning is, that instead of putting away from them all illegal and oppressive judgment, they encouraged those who were guilty of them, by assisting in carrying them into execution.

4.—*Beds of ivory.*—Comp. *lecti eburnei* of Horace, and *lecti eborati* of Plautus.—*Stretch themselves.*—סרוחים "S'ruchim" from סרח "sarach," *to be thrown negligently along,* is descriptive of the self-indulgent mode in which the Orientals recline upon their couches,

That eat lambs from the flock,
And calves from the midst of the stall;
5. That sing to the sound of the harp;
They invent for themselves,
Instruments of music, like David;
6. That drink wine out of bowls,
And anoint themselves with the best ointments;
But are not grieved for the ruin of Joseph!
7. Therefore now shall they go into captivity,
At the head of the captives,
And the banquet of those that recline shall cease.
8. The Lord God hath sworn by himself;
Thus saith the Lord, God of hosts:
I abhor the pride of Jacob,
And his palaces I hate;
Hence I will deliver up the city with all therein.
9. And it shall come to pass, that if ten men
Should remain in one house, they shall die;

being stretched upon them at full length. The whole verse sets forth in well chosen expressions the luxurious habits of the opulent.

5.—*That sing.*—According to Gesenius, Hitzig, and Ewald, the verb פרמ "parat" has been selected on purpose, instead of זמר "zimmer" *to sing*, in order to express the contempt in which the music deserved to be held.—*Like David.*—The reference to *David*, who was the sweet singer of Israel, and of whose musical instruments express mention is made Neh. xii., v. 36, is manifestly ironical; implying that, while that monarch devoted his musical talent to the glory of God, the dissipated grandees of Israel consulted only their personal gratification, and that of those who joined their giddy circle.

6.—The persons referred to, indulged to such excess, that ordinary cups were unsuited to their compotations. They likewise anointed themselves with the most precious oils, and evinced a total apathy in regard to the calamities to which their people had already been subject, or the still more serious evils which threatened them.—*Joseph.*—See ch. v., v. 6.

7.—*They shall go.*—Those who had taken the lead in revelry and all manner of wickedness, were to be *first* in the procession of captives. In such a position, their disgrace would be more conspicuous.

8.—The double form of asseveration here employed is unusual, and is strongly emphatic.—*The city.*—According to Rashi: *Jerusalem.* It is, however, possible that Amos had Samaria in view. Hitzig attaches to הסגרתי "hisgarti," the signification of Kal, *to besiege, shut up*, but the usual Hiphil signification better agrees with the following connexion.

9.—*If ten men.*—Referring to ch. v., v. 3.

10. And should a relative, or an embalmer set out,
To remove the bones out of the house,
And say to him that is in the corners of the house:
"Are there yet more with thee?"
He shall then say: "None" . . . .
Then shall he say: "Hush!—It is
"Because they remembered not the name of the Lord!"
11. For behold! the Lord commandeth,
And he smiteth the great house into ruins,
And the small house into fragments.
12. Can horses run upon a rock?
Or can one plough there with oxen?
Yet ye have converted justice into gall,
And the fruit of righteousness into wormwood.
13. Ye that rejoice in a thing of nought,
That say: "By our own strength,

10.—*A relative.*—דוד "dod" is not here to be taken in the special sense of *uncle*, but denotes any near relative on whom it devolved to attend to the funeral rites.—*Or an embalmer.*—Some have attempted to prove from this and some other passages, that it was the practice of the Hebrews to burn their dead. But what is said II Chron. xvi., v. 14, xxi., v. 19; Jer. xxxiv., v. 5, obviously refers to the burning of *spices*, and not of *dead bodies.*—*The bones.*—That by עצמים "atzamim" not mere *bones* are meant, nor bodies so emaciated as to be nothing but skin and bone, which is Winer's opinion, but *dead bodies*, seems established beyond all doubt by a reference to Gen. l., v. 25; Exod. xiii., v. 19; II Kings xiii., 21; Jer. viii., vv. 1-2.—*And say.*—Having removed one body after another, the relative or embalmer, discovering a patient in a corner of the house, inquires whether he is the only survivor? and on receiving an answer that he is, he enjoins silence upon him, and not to murmur; they were punished because they did not hearken to God's Word. This is, in my humble opinion, the translation and exposition of this most difficult verse.

11.—Horace has a sentiment precisely like this: *Regum turres ac pauperum tabernas.*

"With equal pace impartial fate,
"Knocks at the *palace* as the *cottage* gate."

12.—The folly of expecting real prosperity while committing acts of injustice, is forcibly represented by comparing it to the absurdity of attempting to run horses upon a rock, or to plough it with oxen. To add to the strength of the representation, it is put in the interrogative form.

"Have we not seized for ourselves dominion?"

14. For behold! I will raise up against you a nation,
O house of Israel! saith the Lord God of hosts;
And they shall oppress you,
From the entrance of Hamath,
Unto the river of the desert.

CHAPTER VII.

1. Thus the Lord God shewed unto me; and, behold,
He formed locusts at the beginning of the shooting
up of the latter grass; and, behold, it was the
2. latter grass after the king's mowings. And it
came to pass, when they had entirely devoured the
grass of the land, that I said: "O Lord God!

13.—*Dominion.*—Hebrew: "horns;" the symbol of power and dominion.

14.—*The river of the desert.*—Some have referred נחל הערבה "nachal ha'arabah," to the Rhinocorura, otherwise called *the river of Egypt;* others to *the brook of the willows,* or the *Wady-el-Asha,* which flows into the Dead Sea, near Zoar; but it is obvious from II Kings xiv., v. 25, in which the limits here specified are described as constituting those of the kingdom of the ten tribes, that it must mean *the brook Kidron,* which falls into the Dead Sea to the south of Jericho.

1.—*Locusts.*—גבי "Gobai," a name of a locust, occurring only here, and Nah. iii., v. 17, and synonymous with גב "geb," Isa. xxxiii., v. 4. The term is strictly descriptive of the locust in its caterpillar state, and thus agrees with the use of the verb יצר "yatzar," *to form,* which is here used. Credner on Joel, pp. 299-302, elaborately attempts to set aside the derivation of Bochart, yet allows that the word denotes the insect in the first stage of its existence.—*The king's mowing.*—The phrase גזי המלך "gizze hammeleck" may either mean the mowing of the grass which grew on the royal domains, or the first mowings of that belonging to the people, to which the king tyranically laid claim. Considering the character of the times, there can be little doubt that the latter are meant.

2.—That the locusts here referred to are not intended to represent a literal swarm of these insects, but are to be taken figuratively, as denoting a hostile army, just as the fire in the second vision is to be regarded as symbolical of war, may be inferred from the figurative character of the two visions, v. 7, and ch. viii., v. 1. Most probably the army of Pul, king of Assyria, is meant. The Israelites had been greatly reduced by repeated invasions on the part of the Syrian

"forgive, I beseech Thee! how could Jacob stand?
"for he is small."

3. The Lord repented of this:
"It shall not be!" saith the Lord.

4. Thus the Lord God shewed unto me; and, behold, the Lord God called for a contention by fire, that it devour the great deep, and consume the fields.

5. Then I said: "O Lord God! desist, I beseech Thee! how could Jacob stand? for he is small."

6. The Lord repented of this:
"This also shall not be!" saith the Lord God.

7. Thus He shewed me; and, behold, the Lord stood upon a perpendicular wall, with a plumb-line in

8. His hand. And the Lord said unto me: "What "seest thou, Amos?" and I said: "A plumb-line." And the Lord said:
"Behold! I will set a plumb-line
"In the midst of my people Israel;
"I will pass by them no more;

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kings, and were on the point of being attacked by the Assyrians, but purchased their retreat with the sum of one thousand talents of silver. See II Kings xv., vv. 19-20.—*How could Jacob stand.*—How can he possibly sustain the threatened attack, reduced and weak as he is in resources.

4.—By the fire here spoken of we are not to understand a great heat which produced a drought in the land, but *war*, of which it is an appropriate symbol. Comp. Numb xxi., v. 28; Judges ix., v. 15, 20; Isa. lxvi., v. 16. To express the extent of the threatened calamity, the fire, by a bold figure, is represented as drying up the *ocean*, and consuming whatever was found on the dry land. That in the former vision, the calamity had not been inflicted, the use of the verb סלח "S'lach," *forgive*, intimates. In this, it had in part, as the use of the verb חדל "chadal," *desist*, obviously implies.

5, 6.—Here, as in verses 2-3, we have a beautiful instance of the influence of prayer in averting or mitigating the judgments of God.

7.—This vision differs from the two preceding, in the distinct application of the symbol to the punishment of the Israelites. The Divine patience is exhausted. The prophet, in consequence, intercedes no more.—*Pass by them.*—עבר "'Abar," *to pass, pass on*, or *away*, means, in application to sin, *to pass it by*, to forgive, *i.e.*, *I will no more forgive them.*

9. "And the high-places of Israel shall be desolated,
"And the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste;
"And I will rise against the house
"Of Jeroboam with the sword."
10. Then Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, sent to Jeroboam, the king of Israel, saying: "Amos hath
"conspired against thee, in the midst of the house
"of Israel; the land is not able to bear all his
11. "words. For thus hath Amos said: Jeroboam
"shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely
"be lead away captive out of their own land."
12. And Amaziah said to Amos: "Seer! Go, flee to the
"land of Judah, and there eat bread, and prophesy
13. "there. But prophesy no more at Bethel; for it
"is the king's sanctuary, and a royal residence."
14. Then Amos answered, and said to Amaziah: "I
"am no prophet, neither am I the son of a

9.—A definite prediction of the destruction which was to overtake the places of idolatrous worship, and the royal house by which that worship had been established and supported. These are specially mentioned, because to them, as the procuring causes, the destruction was to be traced.

10.—Verses 10-17 contain an interesting historical episode.—*The priest.*— As there was doubtless a number of priests who conducted the idolatrous services at Bethel, כֹּהֵן "Cohen" must here be understood of the *chief* or *high* priest, attached to the royal temple. In the spirit which has characterised a false priesthood in every age, Amaziah brings against the prophet the groundless charge of *treason.*

12.—It does not appear that the king took any notice of the message that was sent him, so that Amaziah was left to try what the interposition of his own authority would effect. He addressed the prophet by the title חֹזֶה "choze," *seer*, most probably with contemptuous reference to his visions. Not imagining that Amos could be actuated by any higher principle than that of selfishness, which reigned in his own heart, the priest advised him to consult his safety by fleeing across the frontier into the kingdom of Judah, where he might obtain his livelihood by the unrestrained exercise of his prophetical gifts. At all events, he could not be permitted any longer to prophesy in the city of *Bethel*, which was distinguished not only as the principal seat of the king's religion, but also as being one of his royal residences. Though the ordinary residence of the Israelitish monarchs was at Samaria, yet as they went at certain stated seasons to Bethel to worship the golden calf, they had a palace built there for their accommodation.

14.—*I am no prophet.*—I am not a prophet *by profession.* I am an extraordinary messenger of God. I am not called to the prophetic

"prophet; but I am an herdsman, and a gatherer
15. "of sycamores. And the Lord took me from
"following the flock, and the Lord said unto me:
16. "Go, prophesy unto my people Israel. Now,
"therefore, hear thou the word of the Lord.
"Thou sayest: Prophesy not against Israel, and
17. "drop nothing against the house of Isaac. There-
"fore thus saith the Lord:
"Thy wife shall be violated in the city,
"And thy sons and daughters shall fall by the
"sword;
"Thy land also shall be divided by lot,
"And thou shalt die in a polluted land;
"And Israel shall surely be led away
"Captive out of their own land."

CHAPTER VIII.

1. Thus the Lord God shewed unto me;

office but for *this occasion*. I have no message to *Judah;* and, therefore, need not go there. I have a message to *Israel* alone, and I must faithfully deliver it.—*The son of a prophet.*—*Pupil* or *disciple* of a prophet. In all probability some of the schools of the prophets, of which we read in the first book of Samuel, were still in existence, in which young men were educated, who devoted themselves to the service of the theocracy in the capacity of public instructors, and to these or to more private studies, under the guidance of some prophet, Amos may be supposed to refer.—*Sycamores.*—A species of tree, abounding in the East, pretty much resembling the mulberry tree, the fruit of which is similar to the fig It is, however, very inferior in quality, and is only eaten by the poorest class of the people. From this circumstance it may be inferred that Amos occupied a humble station in life previous to his being called to prophesy in Israel.

16.—Instead of listening to the prohibition of Amaziah, and retiring from his sphere of duty, Amos continued to discharge the duties of his office at Bethel.—*And drop.*—הטיף "Hittiph," *to distil,* to cause to come down in pleasing and flowing discourse; here parallel with נבא "Naba" *to prophesy.*

17.—*Shall be violated.*—תזנה "Tizneh" is not to be understood of voluntary acts of infidelity on the part of the wife, but of the violence to which she would have to submit on the part of the enemy. This being done בעיר *in the city, i.e.*, openly and publicly, was a great aggravation of the evil.

1—This vision may be regarded as a continuation of the subject with which the last concluded, in the development of which the prophet had been interrupted by Amaziah.

2. And, behold, a basket of late fruit. And he said:
"What seest thou, Amos?" and I said: "A
"basket of late fruit." Then said the Lord unto
me:
The end is come upon my people Israel,
I will pass by them no more.
3. And the songs of the palace shall be howlings,
In that day, saith the Lord God;
Many dead bodies in every place;
They shall be cast forth silently.
4. Hear this! ye that swallow up the needy,
And destroy the poor of the land,
5. Saying: "When will the new moon be over,
"That we may sell corn?
"And the Sabbath, that we may open out grain?"

2.—The paronomasia in קַיִץ "kayitz," and קֵץ "ketz," is marked and forcible.—*Pass by them.*—I will no more forgive them. See ch. vii., v. 8, note.

3.—*The songs of the palace.*—Instead of the pathetic elegies loudly and continuously poured forth at the princely funerals, nothing was to be heard but the frantic howl, announcing, but instantly checked in announcing the greatness of the disaster. Into such howling the joyous songs of the palace were to be converted. The A. V. and others improperly render הֵיכָל "hechol" *temple.* —*Silently.*—Every place shall be filled with the dead, and a dreadful silence shall reign universally; the few that remain being afraid either to speak or to complain.

4.—The prophet resumes his usual style of direct comminatory address. Comp. ch. iv., v., vi.

5.—From this and other passages it is obvious that the Israelites, notwithstanding their idolatrous practices, still kept up the observance of the times and seasons appointed in the law of Moses.—*When will the new moon be over.*—From new moon to new moon the people came to worship before the Lord, and to listen to the teachings of the prophets; it may be supposed that these days of "Rosh chodesh," were kept as holy days, and that no business was transacted on them. These sinners therefore exclaimed: "When will the moon pass over, that we may resume our business?" But bad and execrable as they were, *they* neither sold their corn, nor opened their graneries on the sabbath. They were *saints* when compared to multitudes called *Hebrews*, who keep their shops either *partially* or *entirely open* on the sabbath day, and *buy* and *sell* without any scruple of conscience.—*Open out grain.*—By פַּתַּח בַּר "pathach bar," is meant opening the sacks or granaries in which it was kept, and

Making the ephah small, and the shekel great,
And falsifying the balances for deceit;
6. That we may buy the poor for money,
And the needy for a pair of sandals;
And sell the refuse of grain.
7. The Lord hath sworn by the pride of Jacob:
I will never forget any of their deeds!
8. Shall not the land tremble for this?
And every one mourn that dwelleth therein?
Yea, it shall wholly rise like a river,

bringing it out for sale.—*The ephah small.*—Giving short measure, and taking full price; or, buying with a heavy weight, and selling with one that was light. The *ephah* was a corn measure, containing three *seahs*, and according to Josephus equal to the Attic Medimnus, or somewhat above three English pecks. It is uncertain whether the word be originally Hebrew, or whether it be Egyptian.—*Shekel.*—From שָׁקַל "shakal" *to weigh*, is here used of weights in general. It was originally any piece of metal weighed as an equivalent for what was bought; but came afterwards to signify standard money, and differed in value, according as it was of silver or gold, and as it was estimated by the sacred or royal standard, Exod. xxx., v. 13; II Sam. xiv., v. 26. For the sake of greater emphasis, instead of saying *to make*, or, to *use* deceitful balances, the verb עָוַת "ivveth" *to bend, twist, pervert*, is employed, which in point of meaning, is pleonastic.

6.—*The refuse.*—מֹפָל "Mappal," from נָפַל "naphal," *to fall;* what has fallen off, *refuse, chaff*, etc.

7.—*The pride of Jacob.*—The Targum, Grotius, Dahl, Newcome, and Bauer, understand by "the pride or excellence of Jacob," the excellence conferred upon Jacob. Justi and Ewald, the pride or haughtiness of Jacob. Kimchi, Aben Ezra, Gesenius, Hitzig, Maurer, and Henderson, God Himself, in whom alone the Hebrews gloried while they adhered to the purity of His worship. Against the latter interpretation, which I certainly reject, I must remark, that by גְּאוֹן יַעֲקֹב "Geon Yaakob" cannot possibly be meant *God Himself*, since in ch. vi., v. 6, God says: "I abhor *the pride* of Jacob," (geon yaakob.) In my humble opinion,—and this opinion is strongly supported by Psalm xlvii., v. 5—the "pride of Jacob," is *Jerusalem.*

8.—The land is metaphorically represented as rising and swelling like the Nile, and again falling like the same river; of course, the idea of the heaving and subsiding of the ground during an earthquake is what is intended, as the beginning of the verse shows. That כְּאֹר "kaor," by an elision of the letter Yod, is a defective form of כְּיְאֹר "kaj'or," is evident from the parallel passage, ch. ix.,

It shall be driven, and subside,
Like the river of Egypt.
9. And it shall come to pass in that day,
Saith the Lord God,
That I will cause the sun to go down at noon,
And will darken the land in the bright day.
10. And I will turn your festivals into mourning,
And all your songs into lamentation;
And I will bring sack-cloth upon all loins,
And baldness upon every head;
And I will make it as the mourning for an only son,
And the end thereof as a bitter day.
11. Behold! days are coming, saith the Lord God,
When I will send a famine into the land;
Not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water,
But of hearing the words of the Lord.
12. And men shall wander from sea to sea,
And shall run up and down,
From the North even to the East,
Seeking the word of the Lord,
But they shall not find it.

v. 5. Several MSS. indeed, read "kaj'or" in full.—*Be driven.*—גרשׁ "Garash" is used in Niphal, to express the violent agitation of the sea when raised by the wind, Isa. lvii., v. 20. It here refers to the rise of the Nile, which is generally above twenty feet.

9.—Some think the prophet here predicts the total eclipse of the sun, which took place at the feast of weeks in the year that Jeroboam died (see Usher's Annals); but whatever there may be in the language borrowed from such an event, consistency of interpretation requires it to be taken metaphorically, as descriptive of a change from circumstances of prosperity to those of adversity. Comp. Jer. xv., v. 9; Ezek. xxxii., vv. 7-10.

10.—*For an only son.*—The death of an only son was regarded by the Hebrews as the most mournful of events. Comp. Jer. vi., v. 26; Zech. xii., v. 10.

12.—*Even to the East.*—מזרח "Mizrach," *sun-rise*, is used, where geographically we should have expected ימין "Yamin," or נגב "Negeb," *the south*; but the term may have been chosen in order to intimate the complete alienation of Israel from Judah, in consequence of which no one would think of repairing to Jerusalem for oracular information. That any transposition of the words has taken place, I cannot, with Houbigant and Newcome suppose. The Atnach is improperly placed under מזרח "Mizrach," instead of under ישוטטו "yeshottu."

13. In that day the fair virgins
And the young men shall faint for thirst;
14. That swear by the sin of Samaria,
And say: "Long live thy god, O Dan!"
And: "Long live the way to Beer-sheba!"
They shall fall, and rise no more.

CHAPTER IX.

1. I saw the Lord standing beside the altar, and he said:
Smite the head of the column,
That the door-posts may shake;
And break them in pieces, on the heads of them all;
Their posterity I will slay by the sword;
None of their fugitives shall make his escape,
Nor shall any that slip away be delivered.

13.—*Shall faint.*—תתעלפנה "Tithalaphna," properly means, *they shall feel themselves involved in darkness*, which is physically true of those who are seized with syncope.

14.—*The sin.*—Or crime of Samaria, *i.e.*, the golden calf, and other objects of unlawful worship which were the occasion of sin and guilt to the Israelites.—*Thy god, O Dan.*—The golden calf erected by Jeroboam in Dan, I Kings xii., vv. 26-28.—*The way to Beer-sheba.*—The way or pilgrimage to Beer-sheba. Thus Kimchi, Michaelis, Bauer, and Fuerstenthal, and this, I think, is the true interpretation. See ch. v., v. 5.

1.—By the Targum, Calvin, Drusius, Grotius, Justi, Rosenmüller, and Hengstenberg, the scene of this vision is laid at the temple of Jerusalem; by Cyril, Munster, Tarnovius, Schmidius, Lowth, Michaelis, Dahl, Bauer, Hitzig, Fuerstenthal, and Ewald, at the idolatrous temple at Bethel, and, in my opinion, rightly. Calvin does not show his usual tact in objecting to this interpretation, on the ground that it represents God as indirectly approving of superstition; for, though the true God was seen beside the idolatrous altar, it was not for the purpose of receiving homage, but of commanding that the whole of the erection of worship at Bethel should be destroyed. No argument in favour of Jerusalem can be built on the use of the *article*, "*the* altar," but the contrary. The idolatrous object to which sacrifices were offered at Bethel, having been mentioned in the preceding verse, nothing is more natural than a reference here to the altar on which they were presented.—*Door-posts.*—Comp. Isa. vi., v. 4; the similarity, in some respects, between that passage and the present, may have suggested the idea that the temple at Jerusalem is here meant.—*Break them.*—The heads of the column upon the heads of them all—priests and worshippers.—*Their posterity.*—The children of those who perished in the attack upon the

2. Though they break through in hades,
Thence shall my hand take them;
And though they climb up to heaven,
Thence will I bring them down.
3. And though they hide themselves on the summit of Carmel,
There I will search them out and take them;
And though they conceal themselves
From mine eyes in the bottom of the sea,
There I will command the serpent,
And he shall bite them.
4. And though they go into captivity before their enemies,
There will I command the sword,
And it shall kill them;
I will set mine eyes upon them for evil,
And not for good.
5. For it is the Lord God of hosts,
That toucheth the earth and it melteth;
And all that dwell therein mourn;
It riseth, all of it, like the river,
And subsideth like the river of Egypt.

idolatrous temple. When threatened by the Assyrians, they would flock in crowds to Bethel, to implore protection from the golden calf, and, while thus assembled, they should perish, along with the vain object of their trust; they should, in fact, be buried in the ruins.

2-4.—These verses exhibit a beautiful series of supposed cases of attempt at escape from the judgments of God, and the utter futility of every attempt of the kind. שאול "hades" and שמים "heaven," are, as usual, employed as extreme points of opposition. Comp. Job ix., v. 8; Ps. cxxxix., v. 8; Isa. xiv., vv. 13-14.

3.—*The summit of Carmel.*—Not only was Mount Carmel celebrated on account of its general fertility, but also on account of the dense forests and large caverns with which it abounded. These, together with its height, which is about twelve hundred feet, afforded the fittest possible places of concealment. Richter, in his Pilgrimage, p. 65, says: "Mount Carmel is entirely covered with green; on its *summits* are pines and oaks, and further down, olive and laurel trees, etc. These forests would furnish safe hiding places, equally with the caves, which are chiefly on the west side facing the sea."—*The bottom of the* Mediterranean *sea*, forms a striking contrast to the summit of Carmel, which beetles above it.

5.—See ch. viii., v. 8, where the same images are used.

6. He that buildeth his upper chambers in the heavens,
And foundeth his vaults upon the earth,
He that calleth to the waters of the sea,
And poureth them out on the surface of the earth;
The Lord is his name.

7. Are ye not as the Cushites to me,
O Sons of Israel? saith the Lord.
Did I not bring Israel from the land of Egypt?
The Philistines from Caphtor?
And the Syrians from Kir?
8. Behold the eyes of the Lord God
Are upon the sinful kingdom,

6.—*His upper chambers.*—Harmer collects from Jer. xxii., vv. 13-14, that the chief and most ornamental apartments in the palace which Jehoiakim set himself to build were *upper chambers.* He adds, from Russell: "The chief rooms of the houses of Aleppo at this day are those above; the ground floor being there chiefly made use of for their horses and servants. Perhaps the prophet Amos referred to this circumstance, when he spoke of the heavens as God's chambers, the most noble and splendid apartments of the palace of God, and where his presence is chiefly manifested ('Observations,' vol. 1., p. 344). What is here said of the houses of Aleppo is equally true in other Oriental towns, all the state-rooms and apartments occupied by the family being above ground, while the ground floor is occupied by store-rooms, kitchens, and servants' offices and apartments.—*His vaults.*—אֲגֻדָּה *agudah*, a body or mass, the parts of which are firmly compacted; obviously used of the רָקִיעַ *rakia'*, or hemispheric expanse or vault of heaven; which, from its appearing to the eye to rest upon the earth, is here said to be founded upon it. To render it, with the Targum, *Congregation*, and apply it to the Church, as a body of believers, firmly united together, is altogether unsuitable to the connexion.

7.—By appealing to the fact, that, in his providence, he had removed different nations from their original abodes, and settled them elsewhere, God repels the idea, which the Israelites were so prone to entertain, that, because He had brought them out of Egypt, and given them the land of Canaan, they were peculiarly the objects of his regard, and could never be subdued or destroyed. He had brought other nations, and some of their neighbours, who were their enemies, from comparatively barren countries, into fruitful territories. —*The Cushites.*—The inhabitants of the African Cush, or Ethiopia. Arab.: *Abyssinians.*—*Caphtor.*—Genesius hesitates between Crete and Cappodocia, as designated by the Hebrews *Caphtor*, but inclines to the former. (Thesaurus, p. 709.)—*Kir.*—The country lying on the river *Kur* or Cyrus.

8.—*The eyes—upon.*—Hebrew: *in.* The eyes of a person are said to be *in* any one, when he keeps him steadily in view, in order

And I will destroy it from the face of the earth;
Yet I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob,
Saith the Lord.

9. For, behold, I will command,
And will shake the house of Israel among all the nations,
As one shaketh [corn] in a sieve,
And not a grain falleth to the ground.

10. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword,
That say: "The evil shall not reach nor overtake us."

11. In that day I will raise up
The booth of David that is fallen,
And will close up its breaches;
And I will raise up its ruins,
And I will build it up, as in the days of old;

to do him good, or to punish him. In the present instance, the phrase conveys the idea of hostility.—*I will not utterly destroy.*—Though the kingdom of the ten tribes was to be for ever destroyed, yet, as descendants of their patriarchal ancestors, they should not become extinct. In the midst of the wrath which their sinfulness should bring upon them, God would remember mercy.

9.—While the figurative language here emplyed expresses the violence of the sifting process to which the Israelites should be subjected, it likewise sets forth the great care that would be exercised for their preservation.—*A grain.*—צְרוֹר "Tzeror" here signifies the smallest *grain* or *particle* of corn.

10.—Those are specially intended, who scoffingly denied the possibility of the Assyrian conquest, namely, the dissipated magnates of Samaria. Such should perish in the war.

11.—*I will raise up.*—It is well known, that *the kingdom of Israel*, the most profane and idolatrous, fell first; and that the *kingdom of Judah*, continued long after, and enjoyed considerable prosperity under Hezekiah and Josiah. The remnant of the Israelites that were left by the Assyrians became united to the kingdom of Judah; and of the others, many afterwards joined them.—*The booth of David.*—The kingdom of David. It is here called: סֻכַּת "*the booth* of David," to denote the reduced state of his family, and the affairs of the people. When the *prosperity* of that family is spoken of, the more dignified phrase: בֵּית "*the house* of David," is employed. See II Sam., iii., v. 1; I Kings, xi., v. 38; Isa. vii., vv. 2, 13; אֹהֶל "*The tent* of David" (Isa. xvi., v. 5) would seem to express an intermediate state of things. That *David* is here understood of the *Messiah*, I cannot find. סֻכָּה "Succah" *tugurium, a booth*, so called from its being constructed by interweaving the boughs and branches of trees with each other, and its thus forming a rude shelter from

12. So that those—upon whom my name is called—
May possess the remnant of Edom, and all the nations,
Saith the Lord, that doeth this.
13. Behold the days are coming, saith the Lord,
That the ploughman shall overtake the reaper,
And the treader of grapes him that soweth the seed;
And the mountains shall drop with new wine,
And all the hills shall melt.
14. And I will bring back
The captives of my people Israel,
That they may rebuild the desolate cities,

the storm. It was in such booths the Hebrews dwelt during the seven days of חג הסכות *the feast of booths*, commonly called "the feast of tabernacles." See Levit. xxiii., vv. 40-43. Root סכך "sachach," *to protect*. See also the Talmud, Sandhedrin, fol. 96. 2.

12.—*So that those.*—This verse has been misunderstood by all Christian translators and commentators, and being quoted Acts xv., v. 17, Bp. Newcome makes emendations in the text so as to agree with the Sept., and renders: "That the residue of *men* may seek the Lord (the lxx. may seek *me*), and all the heathen who are called by My name;" and Boothroyd follows suit. It is needless to observe, that not one of the MSS. collated by Kennicott and de Rossi, favours or countenances any alteration. I hope that the qualified student of Scripture will bear out my rendering, as the true meaning of our prophet's words.—*The remnant of Edom.*—Owing to the enmity which had existed between Edom and the Jews, they had mutually harassed and wasted each other, in consequence of which, and of invasions and wars on the part of other powers, nothing but a *remnant* of the former was left; of this remnant, a great portion was proselytised to the Jewish faith in the time of John Hyrcanus.

13.—Similar expressions occur in Levit. xxvi., v. 5, and appear to be used as poetical terms to denote the copiousness and long continuance of the harvest and vintage. Harmer thinks that the expressions involve the intimation that the vintage and harvest should not be gathered in an immature condition, as is now, and probably was then, often necessary from fear of the Arabs and others, who are in the habit of committing ruinous depredations upon the ripened fruits and corn fields. Thus understood, the words of the prophet would express not only abundance, but peace and safety.—*The mountains shall drop.*—The metaphorical language here employed is at once, in the highest degree, bold and pleasing. The Hebrews were accustomed to construct terraces on the sides of the mountains and other elevations, on which they planted vines. Of this fact, the prophet avails himself, and represents the immense abundance of the produce to be such, that the eminences themselves would appear to be converted into the juice of the grape.

And inhabit them;
That they may plant vineyards,
And drink the wine thereof;
That they may make gardens,
And eat of their fruit.

15. For I will plant them upon their own land,
And they shall no more be torn away
From their land which I have given them,
Saith the Lord thy God.

14.—*Plant vineyards.*—See ch. v., v. 11. When they were wicked, they laboured for others; now they should labour for themselves.

OBADIAH.

INTRODUCTION.

The prophecy of Obadiah, consisting only of twenty-one verses, is the shortest book of the Holy Scriptures. Jerome calls him, *parvus propheta, verbum supputatione, non sensum.* Of his origin, life, and circumstances, we know nothing; but, as usual, various conjectures have been broached by Jewish and Christian *savans*.—Some identifying him with the pious Obadiah who lived at the court of Ahab; some, with the overseer of the workmen, mentioned II Chron. xxxiv, v. 12; and some, with others of the same name; while there is no lack of legendary notices respecting the place of his birth, sepulchre, etc. See Carpzovii Introd. tom. III., pp. 332-333.

That he flourished after the capture of Jerusalem by the Chaldeans, may be inferred from his obvious reference to that event, verses 11-14; for it is more natural to regard these verses as descriptive of the past, than as prophetical anticipations of the future. He must, therefore, have lived after, or been contemporary with Jeremiah, and *not* with Hoshea, Joel, and Amos, as Grotius, Huet, and Lightfoot, maintain. Sufficient proof of his having lived in or after the time of that prophet, has been supposed to be found in the almost verbal agreement between verses 1-8, and certain verses inserted in the parallel prophecy, Jerem. xlix., it being assumed that he must have borrowed from Jeremiah. This opinion, however, though held by Luther, Bertholdt, Credner, Hitzig, and Knobel, is less probable than the contrary hypothesis, which has been advocated by Tarnovius, Schmidius, Du Veil, Drusius, Newcome, Eichhorn, Jahn, Schnurrer, Rosenmüller, Holzapfel, Hendewerk, Hävernick, and Maurer. Indeed, a comparison of the structure of the parallel prophecies goes satisfactorily to show the priority of our prophet, as has been ably done by Schnurrer, in his Disputatio Philologica in Obadiam, Tubingen, 1787, 4to. Add to which that Jeremiah appears to have been in the habit of partially quoting from preceding prophets. Comp. Isai. xv., xvi., with Jerem. xlviii. This view is confirmed by the opinion of Ewald, that both these writers copied from some earlier prophet, since he admits that Obadiah has preserved, in a less altered condition, the more energetic and unusual manner of the original than Jeremiah. In brief, the portion in question is so entirely in keeping with the remainder of the book, that they must be considered as having been originally delivered by the same individual; whereas Jeremiah presents it in the form of *disjectra membra poetæ.*

In all probability the prophecy was delivered between the year B.C. 588, when Jerusalem was taken by the Chaldeans, and the termination of the siege of Tyre by Nebuchadnezzar. During this interval, that monarch subdued the Idumeans, and other neighbouring nations.

Of the composition of Obadiah, little can be said, owing to its extreme brevity.

The subjects of the prophecy are the judgments to be inflicted upon the Idumeans on account of their wanton and cruel conduct towards the Jews at the time of the Chaldean invasion; and the restoration of the latter from captivity. The book may, therefore, be fitly divided into two parts: the first comprising verses 1-16, which contain a reprehension of the pride, self-confidence, and unfeeling cruelty of the former people, and definite predictions of their destruction; the latter, verses 17-21, in which it is promised that the Jews should not only be restored to their own land, but possess the territories of the surrounding nations, especially Idumea.

The reason why the book occupies its present unchronological position in the Hebrew Bible, is supposed to be the connexion between the subjects of which it treats, and the mention made of "the residue of Edom," at the conclusion of the preceding book of Amos.

OBADIAH.

1. THE VISION OF OBADIAH.
Thus saith the Lord concerning Edom:
(We have heard a report from the Lord,
And a messenger is sent among the nations [saying]:
"Up! let us rise against her to battle!")
2. Behold I have made thee small among the nations;
Thou art exceedingly despised.
3. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee,
Thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock,
Whose habitation is high;
That saith in his heart:
"Who shall bring me down to the ground?"

1.—Eichhorn, Rosenmüller, Jaeger, and Hendewerk, have raised unnecessary doubt respecting the genuineness of the title and introduction contained in this verse, which have been fully obviated by Schnurrer, Maurer, Hitzig, and Fuerstenthal.—*We have heard.*—Obadiah himself and the other prophets who prophesied against Edom, viz.: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hezekiel, and Amos. Comp. Jerem. xlix., v. 14.—*A report.*—The report or communication itself is contained in the last line of the verse.

2.—*Small—despised.*—This expression is *not* designed to mark the comparatively limited and despicable character of Idumea, geographically considered, as Bp. Newcome interprets, but describes the miserable condition to which it was to be reduced by its enemies. Rashi comments on this verse: "Both thy father and mother (Isaac and Rebecca) called thee their *greatest* son; but before Me thou art only *small.*"

3.—The Idumeans are taunted with the proud confidence which they placed in their lofty and precipitous mountain fastnesses, and the insolence with which they scouted every attempt to subdue them. These positions, strong by nature, and many of them rendered still more so by art, they deemed absolutely impregnable. Such inaccessible places are appropriately called *cliffs of the rock.* Some interpreters are of opinion that by סלע "Sela," we are to understand the *city* of that name, otherwise called *Petra*, situated in Wady-Mûsa, and celebrated as the capital of Idumea. The "Cliffs" would, on

4. Though thou mountest aloft like the eagle,
And though thou settest thy nest among the stars,
Thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord.
5. If thieves had come to thee, or night-robbers,
How couldest thou have been left destitute?

this interpreation, be the high and inaccessible rocks which beetled over that metropolis. I prefer taking the word in its literal acceptation, and view it as a collective, equivalent to the plural of the lxx., and other ancient versions, and thus describing the rocky character of the country generally, as well as that about Petra in particular. The י in שֹׁכְנִי is simply a poetic paragogic, of which several examples occur in the Benoni participle. See Gen. xlix., v. 11; Deut. xxxiii., v. 16; Isai. xxii., v. 16; Micah vii., v. 14. In שִׁבְתּוֹ there is a transition from the second person to the third, for the sake of more graphically pointing out the proud position of Edom. Comp. Isai. xxii., v. 16.

4.—By a bold but beautiful hyperbole, the Idumeans are told, that, to what height soever they might remove, and how entirely they might imagine themselves to be beyond the reach of their enemies, God would dislodge them, and deliver them into their power. Comp. Job. xxxix., vv. 27-28:

"Doth the eagle mount aloft at thy command,
And make his nest on high?
On the rock he dwelleth and abideth,
Upon the craggy rock, in a secure place."

שִׂים Ewald and Hitzig take to be a passive participle; I consider it is the infinitive construct.—*The stars.*—This must be understood literally, as the highest objects which present themselves to the eye, and *not* of the tops of the highest rocks, or even heaven itself, as some commentators maintain.—*Will I bring thee down.*—This is a direct reply to the vaunting question (verse 3) "Who shall bring me down?"

5.—*If thieves.*—The Idumeans are here taught that their devastation would be complete. The manner in which they should be treated would be very different from that adopted by private thieves, or by a party of marauding nomades, who usually seize as much as they can, and especially what they have set their minds on, in the hurry of the moment, leaving the rest of the property to its possessors. They should even fare worse than the vines, on which the vintagers, though they cut down the bunches generally, still left some that might be gleaned afterwards. In Jeremiah the order of the illustrations is reversed, the vintages being taken first. —*Night-robbers.*—In such a country as Idumea, a predatory attack could only have been attempted in the night, especially on such places as were most strongly fortified by nature, and commanded a view of the immediately surrounding legions. Hitzig thinks the prophet had Petra specially in his eye, on account of its having been the great emporium of that part of the world. The passage in Jeremiah (xlix., v. 9) is less forcible.—*How couldest thou have been left destitute.*—This passage has offended some fastidious critics,

They only steal till they have enough!
If vintagers had overtaken thee—
They would have left some gleanings!

6. But how is Esau searched out!
His hidden treasures espied!

7. All thine allies have driven thee to the frontier;
Those who were at peace with thee
Have deceived, overpowered thee;
They that eat thy bread have laid a snare under thee.

Bp. Newcome removes this passage to the commencement of verse 6, and is followed by Boothroyd. There is not the slightest ground for such an alteration of the Textus Receptus.

6.—The patronymic "Esau" is construed as a collective noun with the plural of the verb, and at the same time, with the singular pronominal affix. In the translation I have been obliged to employ the singular in both cases.—*His hidden treasures.*—The original may either signify places where treasures are *hidden*, or the treasures themselves; or the term may be explained of *hiding-places* to which men resort in order to elude an enemy. In my rendering, I have followed Fuerstenthal. Instead of the exclamatory form here employed, Jeremiah adopts that of direct personal assertion, changing at the same time חפשׂ into חשׂף, and מצפניו into מסתריו.—Sharpe adds to this verse the two first words of verse 7, and renders: "His hidden places sought ought to the very boundary." I can see no reason for such emendations.

7.—*Driven thee.*—שׁלּח, which in Kal has the signification, *to send, send away*, signifies in Piel *to dismiss, eject, expel*, conveying the superadded idea of compulsion or violence. Connected, as here, with עד, the verb implies expulsion beyond the frontier specified; and the whole sentence is descriptive of transportation into a state of captivity. Thus the Targum: "They shall lead thee captive from the border." By אנשׁי בריתך *the men of thy covenant*, are those meant, who had formerly pledged assistance to the Edomites; *confederates, allies;* by אנשׁי שׁלמך, *the men of thy peace*, neighbouring states, which were on terms of peace and friendship with them. Before לחמך supply אנשׁי from the preceding—*the men of thy bread*, or אכלי, may be understood, *those who eat thy bread;* and thus the phrase will be descriptive of dependents, some of the poorer tribes of the desert, who subsisted on the bounty of the Edomites, and whose aid they might reasonably expect in case of any emergency. Comp. Ps. xli., v. 10; though there the idea of familiarity, rather than that of dependence, seems intended to be expressed.—*A snare.*—There is some difficulty in determining the meaning of מזור. The Targum, lxx., Syriac, and Vulg. all agree in the idea of *treachery*, or the employment of means by which one might be subverted or ensnared. This seems to be the only suitable meaning in this place. The use of ישׂימו תחתך, *they place under thee*, most naturally

(There is no understanding in him !)

8. Is it not in that day, saith the Lord,
That I shall cause the wise men to perish from Edom,
And the men of understanding from the mount of Esau ?

suggests the idea of a *gin* or *trap*, which may be said to deceive or act falsely by those who tread upon it; so that the notions of *treachery, plot, net, snare,* may be combined in furnishing the true signification. Fürst, who derives the word from זוּר, gives the significations thus: "circumligare, obligatio vulneris, fascia, hinc medicina; moraliter: *laqueorum connexio, perfidia fallax, insidiosa, fraudulenta.*—To no quarter could the Idumeans look for aid. Their allies, their neighbours, their very dependents, so far from assisting them, would act treacherously towards them, and employ every means, both of an open and covert nature, to effect their ruin.—*There is no understanding in him.*—The prophet turns off again from the direct mode of address, and employs the third person, for the purpose of more emphatically exposing their folly in placing confidence in those who were totally unworthy of it. It would be highly uncritical, with the Targum, Houbigant and Newcome, to change בּוֹ *in him,* into בָּךְ, *in thee.*

8.—The Idumeans confided, not only in the natural strength of their country, but in the superiority of their intellectual talent. That they excelled in the arts and sciences, is abundantly proved by the numerous traces of them in the Book of Job. They were, indeed, proverbial for their philosophy, for the cultivation of which, their intercourse with Babylon and Egypt was exceedingly favourable, as were likewise their means of acquiring information from the numerous caravans whose route lay through their country, thus forming a chain of communication between Europe and India. Speaking of wisdom, the author of the Book of Baruch says, in reference to their celebrity as sages of antiquity, ch. iii., 22-23:

"It hath not been heard of in Canaan,
Neither hath it been seen in Teman.
The Hagarenes that seek wisdom upon earth,
The merchants of Meran and of Teman,
The mythologists, and investigators of intelligence,
None of these have known the ways of wisdom,
Nor remembered her paths."

—*The mount of Esau.*— The mountainous region of Seir, to the south of Palestine, now called *Jebel Sherah*, and *esh-Sherah*, extending as far south as Akabah. It was originally inhabited by the Horites, or Troglodytae, so called because they dwelt in the caves of the mountains, whom the posterity of Esau expelled, and taking possession of the country, spread themselves as far towards the north as the borders of Moab. It was particularly to the more northerly portion of this region that the name of *Jebel*, or Gebalene, was given.

9. Thy mighty men, O Teman, shall be dismayed,
That every one may be cut off
From mount Esau by slaughter.
10. For thy violence against thy brother Jacob,
Shame shall cover thee;
And thou shalt be cut off for ever.
11. In the day when thou didst take a hostile position,
In the day when foreigners took captive his forces,
And strangers entered his gates,
And cast lots upon Jerusalem—
Even thou wast as one of them!
12. Thou shouldest not have looked on
In the day of thy brother,

9.—*By slaughter.*—Lit. *from* slaughter. This may mean either the immediate or distant cause of their being *cut off*, either the means which God employed, that Edom was cut off by one great slaughter by the enemy; or that which moved God to give them over to destruction, their own slaughter of their brethren, the Jews, as it follows verse 10.

10.—*For thy violence.*—The Edomites had not only slain the Hebrews, but injured them in every possible way; and their cruelties were highly aggravated by the consideration, that those who were the objects of them were descended from the same common parent. Comp. Amos i., v. 11.—*Jacob* is used as a patronymic to denote the Jews. Two distinct periods in the future history of the Idumeans are here pointed out: that during which they should be the subjects of ignominy as a conquered people; and that during which they were to be entirely extinct. From the former they recovered about a century before the Christian era; but they were reduced by John Hyrcanus, and afterwards lost every vestige of their separate existence.

11.—This and the three following verses contain a series of pointed expostulations, which, while they inculpate the Idumeans, describe the various modes in which they had manifested their malice towards the Jews. Some have thought that עמד מנגד means here *to stand aloof*, to assume a neutral position, whence one may observe the movements of two opposing parties; but the declaration at the end of the verse, as well as what is stated in vv. 3 and 14, clearly shows that the phrase is to be taken in a hostile sense, as in II Sam. xviii., v. 13; Dan. x., v. 13.

12.—The future forms אל־תרא, אל־ תשמח etc., etc., are all qualified in signification, by the circumstance, that the speaker has a past event prominently in view, in reference to which, he places himself and those whom he addresses in the time of its passing, and points out what was their duty in reference to it. They are properly subjunctives of negation, expressive of what *should not*

In the day of his being treated as an alien;
Thou shouldest not have rejoiced over the sons of Judah,
In the day of their destruction;
Neither shouldest thou have spoken insolently
In the day of distress;
13. Thou shouldest not have entered the gate of my people,
In the day of their calamity;
Yea, thou shouldest not have looked on their affliction,
In the day of their calamity;
Nor stretched forth thy hand to their wealth,
In the day of their calamity;
14. Neither shouldest thou have stood at the pass,
To cut off those of his that escaped;
Neither shouldest thou have delivered up
Those of his that were left in the day of distress!—

have been done, and therefore have the usual force of the *imperative*. "*Verba Hebraeorum saepe non actum, sed debitum vel officium significat.*" Glassii Philolog. Sacr. lib. III., tract. 3, can. 6; Nicholson's Ewald, § 264. ראה ב means here *to look upon with maligant pleasure*, to feast one's eyes with the calamity of another.—*The day of thy brother.*— יום *day*, is often used to express a *disastrous* or *calamitous period*.—*Treated as an alien.* — נכר "necher," which is taken actively to denote *severe treatment*, is here used passively of the experience of such treatment.—*Spoken insolently.*—Lit.: *to make great the mouth;* to use insolent or contumelious language, such as those employ who exult over a fallen foe. Comp. Ezek. xxxv., v. 13.

13.—*Stretched forth thy hand.*—I think that ידך *thy hand*, should be supplied with the Targum, and that the true reading is תשלח ידך. There a like omission II Sam. vi.; v. 6, where יד, *the hand*, or ידו *his hand*, is supplied by all the Versions and the Targum.

14.—*At the pass.*—פרק "perek," is commonly rendered *biviam*, a parting of a way, or a place where a road breaks off into two. I should rather think, from the idea of *violence* implied in פרק "parak," that it signifies a *break* or *disruption* in a rock or mountain, through which a passage might be effected into the region beyond. Comp. I Kings, xix., v. 11. In all probability, the reference is to the means employed to cut off the retreat of those Jews who attempted to pass through Idumea on their way to Egypt, whither they fled from the Chaldeans.—*To stand at the ravine* or *pass*, graphically describes the attitude of those who are watching in order to intercept

15. But the day of the Lord is near against all the nations!
As thou hast done, so shall he do unto thee;
Thy deed shall come back upon thine own head.
16. For as ye have drunk upon my holy mountain,
So shall all the nations drink continually;
Yea, they shall drink and stagger,
And shall be as though they had not been.
17. But upon Mount Zion shall be the escaped,

a caravan, or a body of travellers, especially in the rugged mountainous regions to the south of Judea. The Idumeans not only in this way prevented the escape of the fugitives; they carried them back as prisoners and delivered them up to the enemy.

15.—In this verse, the conquest of Idumea and all the neighbouring nations by Nebuchadnezzar is declared to be at hand. In the war which he was to carry on against them, due retribution would be rendered to the Edomites.

16.—The Targum, Kimchi, Michaelis, Hendewerk, Hitzig, Pusey, and others, consider the Idumeans to be still addressed, and most of them explain their drinking on Mount Zion of the festivities with which they celebrated the victory gained over the Jews. Grotius refers the words to the same people, only he takes the verb שתה "shatha," in the bad sense, as denoting the drinking of the cup of Divine wrath, and renders: "As ye have drunk *on account of my holy mountain.*" But it seems more natural to regard the words as directed, by a sudden apostrophe, to the Jews, assuring them, that, though the sufferings to which they had been subjected were great, still greater punishment would be inflicted upon the hostile nations by which they had been attacked. The punishment which they suffered was only temporary: that of their enemies would be perpetual. The structure of the passage requires the verb to be taken in the same sense in both parts of the verse. Such, in effect, is the construction put upon the words, Jer. xlix., v. 12. Compare also ch. xxv., vv. 15-29. In this manner the verse is interpreted by Aben Ezra, Rosenmüller, Schnurrer, De Wette, Hesselberg, and Maurer.—*Continually.*—Several Hebrew MSS. read סביב *around*, but all the ancient versions support that of the Textus Receptus, which, according to de Rossi is found in all the most accurate and best MSS. both Spanish and German. In all probability סביב was substituted by some copyist from Jer. xxv., v. 9. What proves that the lxx. had the word תמיד in their Hebrew text, is their having mistaken it for חמר *wine!*

17.—Obadiah here commences his predictions respecting the restoration of the Jews from the Babylonian captivity, and their re-occupancy of Canaan. While the surounding nations were to

And it shall be holy;
And the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions.
18. And the house of Jacob shall be a fire,
And the house of Joseph a flame;
And the house of Esau shall become stubble,
And they shall set them on fire, and devour them;
So that there shall not be a relic of the house of Esau;
For the Lord hath spoken it.
19. And they of the south shall possess mount Esau,
And they of the plain, the Philistines;
They shall also possess the country of Ephraim,
And the country of Samaria;
And Benjamin, Gilead.

disappear, the Jews should regain possession of their holy city, and the land of their fathers.—*And it shall be holy.*—This refers to Mount Zion, which had been polluted by the idolatrous Chaldeans.

18.—Though the houses of Jacob and Joseph are here spoken of separately, it was not the intention of the prophet to teach that the two kingdoms of Judah and Israel would be re-established; yet the special mention of Joseph clearly shows that the ten tribes were to return at the same time, and, jointly with Judah and Benjamin, to possess the land of Palestine and the neighbouring regions. The restored Hebrews would unitedly subdue the Idumeans, which they did in the time of John Hyrcanus, who compelled them to be circumcised, and so incorporated them with the Jews, that they henceforward formed a part of the nation. See Joseph. Antiquities, book xiii., ch. ix., 1. For the metaphorical language compare Numb. xxi., v. 28; Isai. x., v. 17.

19.—By נגב *the south*, or southern part of Palestine, is meant those who should occupy it; and by השפלה *the plain*, those who should occupy the low country along the shore of the Mediterranean. According to the relative positions of those who should take possession of the different parts of the holy land, was to be the enlargement of their territory by the annexation of the adjoining regions, which had formerly been occupied by allies or hostile powers. As there is no subject specified before "the country of Edom and the country of Samaria," it would seem to be intimated that the regions of Ephraim and Samaria were to be occupied by the Jews and the Israelites jointly without any regard to tribal distinctions: and the reason why the tribe of Benjamin is mentioned, is merely on account of the proximity of Gilead to the territory which it originally possessed. That שדה is here employed to denote, not a plain or level country, but a region or district in general, is obvious from the nature of the territory to which reference is made. See Gen. xxxii., v. 1.

20. And the exiles of this host of the sons of Israel,
That are among the Canaanites,
As far as Zarephath,
And the exiles of Jerusalem,
That are in Sepharad,
Shall possess the cities of the South.
21. And they shall go up as conquerors on Mount Zion,
To judge the mount of Esau:
And the kingdom shall be the Lord's.

20.—*Of this host.*—חל, *i.e.*, חיל, *an army, host*, etc., is here used to express the number of Israelitish captives which were found in Phœnicia, into which they had been sold at different times as slaves, and thence into Greece.—*Zarephath.*—Or Zarepta, now called Surafend, a town belonging to Sidon, and situated between that city and Tyre, close to the shore of the Mediterranean. According to the etymology of its name, it must have been a place for smelting metals. In the rocks along the foot of the hills, Dr. Robinson found many excavated tombs, which he makes no doubt once belonged to this ancient city. (PALESTINE, vol. iii., p. 414.) The name is still given to a large village on a hill at some little distance. What city or country is meant by "Sepharad," ספרד, it has been hitherto found impossible to determine. The lxx. *Ephrada*, which in all probability, is a corruption of Zephrada. Aq., Symm., and Theod., *Sapharad.* The Peshito, *Spain;* the Targum, the same; an interpretation unanimously adopted by the Rabbins, who in like manner concur in interpreting צרפת *Zarephath*, of France. Jerome, as instructed by his Jewish teacher, renders it the *Bosphorus.* Some refer it to Sipphara in Mesopotamia, some to Sparta, in support of which hypothesis they appeal to I Macc. xii., v. 21; while others propose ספרה, *Sephara*, Gen. x., v. 30, or the town of Zapphár, mentioned by Ptolemy, as lying between the territory of the Homerites and Sabaeans. To judge from the other geographical relations stated in this and the preceding verse, we should conjecture, that some place to the south or east of Judea is intended. See also Josephus, *Antiq.*, book xiv., ch. iv., 4.

21.—*As conquerors.*—There can be little doubt that the celebrated family of the Maccabees are intended, whose valiant princes governed the Jews for a period of a hundred and twenty-six years, during which time signal victories were gained over the Idumeans, as narrated II Macc. x., 15-23. Joseph. *Antiq.*, book xiii., chapter ix., 1.—*To judge.*—שפט is here used in the sense of *punishing*, as in I. Sam. iii., v. 13.

JONAH.

INTRODUCTION.

Against no book of Scripture have the shafts of infidelity and the sapping arts of anti-supernaturalism been more strenuously directed than against that of the prophet Jonah. As early as the days of Julian and Porphyry it was made the subject of banter and ridicule by the pagans; and, in modern times, while the enemies of revelation have evinced the same spirit, many of its pretended friends have had recourse to methods of interpretation, which would not only remove the book from the category of inspired writings, but, if applied to these writings generally, would annihilate much that is strictly historical in its import, and leave us to wander in the regions of conjecture and fable. Blasche, Grimm, and some others, suppose the whole to have been transacted in a dream; but as Eichhorn justly observes (Einleit. Band iv., § 575), there is not a single circumstance in the narrative that would suggest such an idea; and, besides, whenever any account is given of a dream in Scripture, the fact that such is the case, is always intimated by the writer. The manner in which the book commences and closes, is also objected to this hypothesis, which T. G. A. Müller (Paulus Memorabilien, Stück vi., p. 154) scruples not to assert we are on no ground whatever (durch gar nichts,) warranted to adopt. The theory of an historical allegory was advanced and maintained with great learning, but, at the same time, with the most extravagant license of imagination, by the eccentric Hermann von der Hardt, Professor of the Oriental languages at the University of Helmstedt. (Ænigmata prisci Orbis, Jonas in Luce, etc., Helmstedt, 1723, fol.) According to this author, Jonah was an historical person, but is here symbolical, partly of Manasseh, and partly of Josiah, kings of Judah; the ship was the Jewish state; the storm, the political convulsions which threatened its safety; the master of the ship, Zadok, the high-priest; the great fish, the city of Lybon on the Orontes, where Manasseh was detained as a prisoner, etc. Semler, Michaelis, Herder, Hezel, Stäudlin, Paulus, Meyer, Eichhorn, Niemeyer, and others, have attempted to vindicate to the book the character of a parable, a fable, an apologue, or a moral fiction; while Dereser, Nachtigal, Ammon, Bauer, Goldhorn, Knobel, and others consider it to have had an historical basis, and that it has been invested with its present costume in order that it might answer didactic purposes. On the other hand Rosenmüller, Gesenius, De Wette, Maurer, and Winer, derive it from popular tradition: some tracing it to the fable of the deliverance of Andromeda from a sea-monster, by Perseus, Appollod. II., 4, 3; Ovid, Metamorph. iv.,

662, etc. ; and some, to that of Hercules, who sprang into the jaws of an immense fish, and was three days in its belly, when he undertook to save Hesione, Iliad, xx., 145, xxi., 442 ; Diod. Sic. iv., 42 ; Tzetz. ad Lycophr. Cassand. 33 ; Cyrill Alex., in Jon. II.

Much as some of these writers may have in common with each other, there are some essential points on which they are totally at variance ; while all frankly acknowledge the difficulties which clog the subject.

The opinion which has been most generally entertained, is that which accords to the book a strictly historical character ; in other words, which affirms that it is a relation of facts which actually took place in the life and experience of the prophet. Nor can I view it in any other light, while I hold fast an enlightened belief in the Divine authority of the books composing the canon of the Old Testament.

On perusing the first sentence every unprejudiced reader must conclude that there had existed such a prophet, and that what follows is a simple narrative of facts. The formula ויהי דבר יחוה—לאמר is so appropriated, as the usual introductory to real prophetical communication, that to put any other construction upon it would be a gross violation of one of the first principles of interpretation. Comp. II Chron. xi., v. 2 ; Isai. xxxviii., v. 4 ; Jer. i., v. 4, ii., v. 1, xiv., v. 1, xvi., v. 1, xxviii., v. 12, xxix., v. 30 ; Ezek. iii., v. 16 ; Hag. i., vv. 1, 3, ii., v. 20 ; Zech. iv., v. 8.

Against the plenary historical character of the book, the miraculous nature of some of the transactions has been objected ; but referring for an investigation of these transactions to the commentary, and taking for granted an interposition of miraculous agency in the deliverance of the prophet, when cast into the sea, may it not be fairly asked, whether there is nothing in the circumstances of the case to justify such interposition ? The commission was most important in its own nature, but likewise most unusual, and confessedly most hazardous in its execution ; one from which it was extremely natural for Jonah to shrink, and which required the most confirmatory evidence of its Divine origin to induce him to act upon it. The miracle selected for the purpose of furnishing him with this evidence, however extraordinary in itself, was in exact keeping with the circumstances in which he was placed ; and, in so far, was parallel with those wrought in connexion with the mission of Moses, Exod. iii., v. 4 ; and of Elijah I Kings xvii. ; and it is undeniable, that most of the writers who have called it in question, have either flatly denied the existence of all Scripture miracles, or attempted, in some way or other, to account for them on mere natural principles. The same mode of reasoning, which goes to set aside one, will, if fully carried out, go to set aside all.

That our prophet is the same who predicted the restoration of the ancient boundaries of the kingdom of the ten tribes, II Kings xiv., v. 25, is rendered certain by identity of name, parentage, and office ; and as that prediction received its accomplishment in the reign of Jeroboam II, it is obvious he must at least have been con-

temporary with that monarch, if he did not flourish at a still more early period. He is justly considered to have been the most ancient of all the Hebrew prophets whose writings are contained in the canon.

Whether Jonah composed the book himself, or whether it was written at a more recent period, has been matter of dispute. Of the circumstance, that he is spoken of in the third person, no account is to be made, since it is a style of writing frequently adopted by the sacred penmen, as it is also by profane authors. Nor can the occurrence of two or three Chaldee words, as סְפִינָה, *a ship*, עָשַׁת, *to think*, מְטַם, *command*, be justly objected against the early authorship; for the prophet must have had considerable intercourse with persons who spoke foreign languages, which could not but exert some influence on his style. With respect to סְפִינָה, there is every reason to conclude that it was the nautical term in use among the Phœnicians, and so might have been adopted at an early period into all the cognate dialects, though they had other words by which to express the same thing. The use of the compound participle שִׁלְמִי and בִּשְׁלִי does not necessarily argue a late date, since there was nothing to prevent their being appropriated under the circumstances of the prophet, just as they came to be adopted, under somewhat similar circumstances, by other writers. The employment of שׁ, the abbreviated form of אֲשֶׁר, in Judges v., v. 7, is an undeniable example of its adoption at an early period. And it is very doubtful whether it be proper to regard it as Chaldaism at all, though it is found is some portions of the Hebrew Scriptures and not in others! (See Holden on Ecclesiastes, Introd. Dissert., pp. 10-13.)

It has also been alleged against the antiquity of the book, that the writer uses the substantive verb in the past sense, when describing the size of Nineveh, וְנִינְוֵה הָיְתָה עִיר־ גְּדוֹלָה ch. iii., v. 3, as if the city had been destroyed before his time; but the past tense is evidently employed for the simple purpose of preserving uniformity in the style of the narrative, and, as De Wette, acknowledges, *bedeuted nichts*. (Lehrbuch, § 237.)

In point of style, the book is remarkable for the simplicity of its prose: the only portion of poetry is ch. ii., vv. 3-10, which possess considerable spirit and force, though some parts of it are evidently a repetition of certain sentences in the Psalms of David, with which the prophet appears to have been familiar.

Of the numerous traditions, which profess to give us information respecting Jonah, I would say with Luther: *Das glaube wer da will, ich glaube es nicht*. All that we learn from Scripture is, that his father's name was Amittai, and that his birth-place was Gath-hepher (גַּת הַחֵפֶר, II Kings xiv., v. 25; גִּתָּה חֵפֶר, Josh. xix., v. 13,) a city in the tribe of Zebulon, from which latter circumstance it appears that he was an Israelite, and not a Jew.

In this book the patience and clemency of God are strikingly contrasted with the selfishness and unbelief of man; and, as inserted in the canon of Scripture, it was no doubt primarily designed to teach the Jews the moral lessons, that the Divine regard was not confined to them alone, but was extended to other subjects of the general government of God; that wickedness, if persisted in, will meet with condign punishment; that God has no pleasure in inflicting such punishment, but delights in repentance of the guilty; and that if pagans yielded so prompt a compliance with a single prophetic message, it behoved those who were continually instructed by the servants of God, seriously to reflect on the guilt which they contracted by refusing to listen to their admonitions.

JONAH.

CHAPTER I.

1. Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah, the son
2. of Amittai, saying: "Arise, go to Nineveh, that

1.—*Now.*—From the circumstance that the book commences with the conjunction ו, commonly rendered *and*, some have inferred that it is merely the fragment of a larger work, written by the same hand; but though this particle is most commonly used to connect the following sentence with something which precedes it, and is placed at the beginning of historical books to mark their connexion with a foregoing narrative, as Exod. i., v. 1; I Kings i., v. 1; Ezra i., v. 1; yet it is also employed inchoatively where there is no connexion whatever, as Ruth i., v. 1; Esther i., v. i; and as specially parallel, Ezek. i., v. 1. It serves to no other purpose in such cases than merely to qualify the apocopated future, so as to make it represent the historical past tense.—*The word of the Lord came to Jonah.*—This formula is so appropriated, as the usual introduction to real prophetical communication, that to put any other construction upon it would be a gross violation of one of the first principles of interpretation. Comp. II Chron. xi., v. 2; Isai. xxxviii., v. 4; Jer. i., v. 4, 11, ii., v. 1, xiv., v. 1, xxviii., v. 12; xxix., v. 30. Ezek. iii.,v.16; Hag. i., 1, 3. ii., v. 20; Zech., iv., v. 8. —*The son of Amittai.*—All that we learn from Scripture is, that his father's name was Amittai, and that his birthplace was Gath-hepher (Joshua xix., v. 13; II Kings xiv., v. 25;) a city in the tribe of Zebulon, from which latter circumstance it appears that he was an Israelite, and not a Jew.

2.—*Arise.*—By an emphatic idiom, קוּם, *arise*, is used before another verb, as a term of excitement.—*Nineveh.*—This ancient capital of the Assyrian empire, was situated on the eastern bank of the Tigris, opposite to the modern town of Mosul. The name is generally allowed to signify "the residence of Ninus," from נִין *Ninus*, and נָוֶה, *a dwelling;* but according to Hebrew usage, the words should be reversed in order to bring out this meaning. By the Greek and Roman writers it is called *Ninos, Ninus*, after its founder, who must have been identical with *Nimrod*, to whom the foundation of the city is ascribed, Gen. x., v. 11. For, that אַשּׁוּר, *Ashur*, is there to be understood of the country so called, or Assyria, and not of a person of that name, is evident from verse 22, where *Ashur* is mentioned as a descendant of *Shem*, and not of *Ham*. The omission of the local ה, which might have been expected to form אַשּׁוּרָה, cannot be brought as an objection, since it is frequently omitted. See Numb. xxxiv., v. 4; Deut. iii., v. 1.

"great city, and proclaim against it, for their
3. "wickedness is come before me." But Jonah
rose up to flee unto Tarshish, from before the

—*That great city.*—In point of size, it might well be designated "that great city," having been, as stated ch. iii. v. 3, "three days journey" in circumference. If we reckon a day's journey at about twenty miles, which is the average rate of travelling in the East, it will give us sixty miles; which, how immense soever it may appear, quite agrees with the estimate stated by Diodorus Siculus, II, 3: viz. 480 stadia in circuit, 150 stadia in length, and 90 stadia in breadth. As it had long been the mistress of the East, and its situation was favourable for commerce, it possessed immense wealth, but was, at the same time notorious for the most flagrant corruption of manners. After a siege of three years, it was taken by Arbaces the Mede, about the seventh year of Uzziah; and a second time by the united forces of Cyaxares the Mede, and Nabopolassar, Viceroy of Babylon, B.C. 626.—*Proclaim.* —This proclamation consisted in the announcement, that within the space of forty days, the city should be destroyed.—*Against it.*—The lxx. and vulg. render עָלֶיהָ, *in*; and some would assign to the word the signification *to*, which אֶל has, ch. iii., v. 3; but it better agrees with the flight of Jonah to retain that of *against*. The idea of his going to so great a city for the purpose of denouncing punishment against its wicked population so appalled him, that he shrunk from the task. It is also more in keeping with the reason assigned in the following clause of the verse.—*Come before me.*—*To go*, or *come up before God*, is expressive of whatever is supposed specially to attract notice, and require his interference.

3.—*Jonah rose up to flee.*—To think that Jonah hoped to hide himself in the sea, and elude by flight the great Eye of God, were altogether absurd and ignorant, which should not be believed, I say not of a prophet, but of no other sensible person who had any moderate knowledge of God and His Supreme power. The interpretation, therefore of Kimchi: "He imagined that if he went out of the land of Israel, the spirit of prophecy would not rest upon him," is perhaps not wide of the mark. He *well knew* that the Lord of the universe was everywhere present, yet he supposed that it was only at Jerusalem he became apparent to men. For the reason of his flight, see on ch. iv., v. 2.—*Tarshish.*—Named after one of the sons of Javan (Gen. x., v. 4), was an ancient merchant-city of Spain, once proverbial for its wealth (Ps. lxxii., v. 10; Strabo iii. v. 14), which supplied Judea with silver (Jer. x., v. 9), Tyre with silver, iron, tin and lead (Ezek., xxvii, v. 12). It was known to the Greeks and Romans as Tartessus, but in the first century of the Christian Era, it had either ceased to be, or was known under some other name. Pliny (iii. 3) speaks of *Carteia* as so called by the Greeks; in iv., 36, he identifies *Gades*, the Carthaginian *Gadir*, with the Roman Tartesus. Strabo (l.c.) says "some call the present Karteia, Tartessus." —The ships of Tarshish, built for carrying merchandise, were naturally among the largest there constructed. The breaking of *ships of Tarshish*

presence of the Lord; and he went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish, and paid the fare thereof, and went down into it, to go with them unto Tarshish, from before the presence of the Lord.

4. But the Lord caused a great wind to come down upon the sea, and there was a great tempest in

(Ps. lxviii., v. 7), on account of their size and general safety, instanced as a special token of the interposition of God.—*From before the presence of the Lord.*—Not מִפְּנֵי but מִלִּפְנֵי. Aben Ezra notices the distinction. He says: "And as I have searched in all scriptures, and I have not found the word בָּרַח used otherwise than united with the word מִפְּנֵי, as in Ps. cxxxix., v, 7, and Judg. xi., v. 3, and in the prophecy of Jonah I have not found that he fled מִפְּנֵי, *from the face of the Lord*, but מִלִּפְנֵי, *from the presence of the Lord;* and it is written 'As the Lord liveth, *before whom* I stand' (לִפְנֵיו). And so, on the other hand, it is always מִלִּפְנֵי, etc., etc." (I beg to observe, that in one place (I Chron. xix)., v. 18, מִלִּפְנֵי is used, *not* with בָּרַח (of which alone Aben Ezra speaks) but with נוּס.)—*He went down.*—יָרַד is used of *going down* to the sea coast from any inland place, so that it cannot be inferred from the use of the term that it was at Jerusalem Jonah received his commission.—*To Joppa.*—Now Jaffa, a celebrated harbour on the east coast of the Mediterranean, at the distance of ten hours from Jerusalem, of which it is properly the seaport. Thither the cedars were brought from Lebanon for both the first and second temple (II Chr. iii., v. 16: Ezra iii., v. 7); and was deemed so important in the time of the Maccabees, that, when recovered from the Syrians, it was fortified, and was subsequently destroyed by the Romans, as a pirate-haven (Jos. B. J. iii., 9. 3, and Strabo xvi., 2. 28). Its present population amounts to about 7,000 souls.—*Going.*—בּוֹא, which usually signifies *to come, come into, enter*, is obviously here used in the acceptation *go, go out.* Comp. Numb. xxxii., v. 6.—*The fare thereof.*—The fare which Jonah had to pay for a passage in her; not that he engaged the vessel, as Benjoin, after Rashi, would have it. "Only what he was obliged to pay as his share." ABEN EZRA.—This fare, it has been thought, he paid beforehand, that he might secure his flight from the land of Judea; but it may have been owing to a prudential condition on the part of the Captain.—The affix in עִמָּהֶם refers to the ship's crew, understood.

4.—*Caused a great wind to come down.*—The force of הִטִּיל, on application to the storm, will appear on consulting Josephus (B.J. iii., 9. 3), who, speaking of the dangerous navigation of Joppa, says: "Joppa having by nature no haven, for it ends in a rough shore, mostly abrupt, but for a short space having projections, *i.e.*, deep rocks and cliffs advancing into the sea, inclining on either side towards each other (where the traces of the chains of Andromeda yet shewn accredit

the sea, and it was thought the ship would be
5. wrecked. Then the mariners were afraid, and cried, every man unto his god, and threw out the wares that were in the ship into the sea, to lighten it of them; but as for Jonah, he went down into one of the sides of the ship and he

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the antiquity of the fable), and the north wind beating right on the shore, and dashing the high waves against the rocks which receive them, makes the station there a harbourless sea. As those from Joppa were tossing here, a strong wind (called by those who sail here, *the black North wind*) falls upon them at daybreak, dashing straightway some of the ships against each other, some against the rocks, and some, forcing their way against the waves to the open sea, (for the fear the rocky shore) the breakers towering above them, sank." In the Ant. xv., 9. 6, he says that Herod made the port of Ceasarea, "between Dora (in Manasseh) and Joppa, small towns on the sea shore, with bad harbourage, on account of the strong blasts from the South-West, which, accumulating the sea-sand on the shore, admit of no quiet moorage, but merchants must mostly ride at anchor out at sea".—*It was thought.*—חשבה, *i.e.*, by metonymy, *the persons on board*, thought she would founder. Thus Kimchi. But Rashi: כאילו היא נשברת נדמית, "She appeared as if she should be broken."

5.—*The Mariners.*—מלחים, *mariners*, from מלח, *salt*, the quality of the water which they navigate. Syr. and Arab. the same. Kimchi: "those who handle the oars," with reference to the ancient mode of propelling vessels at sea.—*Every one unto his god.*—Being in all probability Phoenicians, they had each his tutelary deity, whose interposition he invoked in the hour of danger.—*The wares.*—From the circumstance that כלים signifies *vessels*, Benjoin infers, that the ship had not taken in a regular cargo, Jonah having paid *the entire freight;* but כלי is used with such latitude of signification in the Hebrew Scriptures, that it may be understood of any kind of manufactured article, such as those enumerated Ezek. xxvii, which formed the merchandise of Tyre.—*But as for Jonah.*—There is a singular beauty in putting "Jonah," the name of the prophet in the nominative absolute. "But as for Jonah"—while all were full of consternation, expecting every moment to become a prey to the raging elements, *he* lay perfectly unconscious of what was transpiring.—*One of the sides.*—So Kimchi, and Aben Ezra. Comp. Judges xii., v. 7; Zech. ix., v. 9, where the *plural* is used instead of the *singular*. It has been objected to the historical character of the book, that it is not to be supposed that the prophet could possibly have composed himself to sleep in the circumstances here described; but nothing was more natural than for a person after the fatigues of a journey, with a mind worn out by excessive anxiety, to be thrown in spite of himself, into such a condition.—For ירכתי הספינה, which occurs only in this place, see preface.

6. lay, and was fast asleep. And the ship-master came near to him, and said to him: "Why art "thou fast asleep? Arise! call upon thy God, "perhaps the GOD will think upon us, that we
7. "perish not." And they said to each other: "Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know "on whose account this calamity hath happened "to us." So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon
8. Jonah. And they said to him: "Tell us now, "thou, on whose account this calamity has hap-

6.—*The ship-master.*—Lit.: *the master of the rope-men.*—חבל being used as a collective. Comp. II Kings xxv., v. 8; Dan. i., v. 3. Kimchi explains thus: "The ship-men are called rope-men, because they draw and loose the ropes of the mast, according to their skill."—*Call upon thy God.*—Their calling upon their own gods had failed them. Perhaps the ship-master had seen something special about Jonah, his manner, or his prophetic garb; the crew were therefore anxious to try the effect of supplication on the part of Jonah to the God of the Hebrews.—*Perhaps the God.*—It deserves to be noticed, that the word for *God* is here used with the article, which is designed to give emphasis to it; *the* GOD—the true God. Comp. Deut. iv., v. 35, and I Kings xviii., v. 39.—*Will think upon us.*—התעשת, *to show oneself considerate, to think of, set one's mind upon;* in Kal, *to invent, fabricate, produce splendid work;* hence the noun עשת, *artificial work*, Song v., v. 14.—The verb has the signification of *thinking, purposing*, etc., both in Chaldee and Syriac. Hitzig prefers the idea of *shining, being friendly, gracious*, and the like.

7.—*Let us cast lots.*—The casting of lots was common among the nations of antiquity, not only when they wished to know some future event, but also when they would determine cases of difficulty, and especially criminal causes, in which no witnesses, could be obtained. The mode of using them is not described in scripture, but from the verb נפל, being commonly employed, it is probable it was by shaking the lots in some box or vase, and then causing them to fall on the ground.—Here, they probably supposed the storm to have arisen on account of some hidden crime of some person aboard. A philosopher being at sea in a violent storm, when the *crew* began to call earnestly on the gods for safety, he said—"Be silent, and cease your prayers; for should the gods know that you are here, we shall all be lost."—Rashi, Kimchi, and Aben Ezra observe: "The crew saw that other ships went on safely, whilst their ship seemed to be broken up; so they thought it was probably on account of some one among them." For בשלמי see introduction.

8.—*Thou, on whose account.*—I have followed Kimchi. The same rendering is adopted by Fuerstenthal, Zunz, and others, and is undoubtedly the true rendering. The words: "On whose account

"pened unto us: What is thine occupation? And
"whence comest thou? What is thy country?
9. "And of what people art thou?" And he
said to them: "I am a Hebrew, and I fear the
"Lord God of Heaven, who made the sea and
10. "the dry land." And the men were greatly
afraid, and said to him: "What hast thou then
"done?"—But when the men knew that he was
fleeing from the presence of the Lord (for he had
11. told them), they said to him: "What shall we do
"unto thee, that the sea may cease from raging
"against us? for the sea groweth more and
12. "more tempestuous." Then he said to them:
"Take me up, and throw me into the sea, then
"the sea will cease from raging against you; for

this calamity has happened unto us," in this verse are omitted in two of Kennicott's MSS., in the Soncin. edition of the Prophets, and in the Vatican copy of the lxx.—*What is thine occupations.*—The seamen were anxious to learn every particular connected with the history of Jonah, in order that they might discover the real cause of the storm.

9.—*I am a Hebrew.*—This was the name by which Israel was known to foreigners. It is used in the Holy Scriptures, only when they are spoken of by foreigners, or speak of themselves to foreigners, or when the sacred writers mention them in contrast with foreigners. By his reply "I am a Hebrew," they then knew his *people*, and his *country;* and replying to their question: "What is thine occupation?" he says: "I fear the Lord;" therefore mine occupation is an honest one, and I have done wrong to no one.— יָרֵא, *to fear*, followed by the accusative, signifies to cherish feelings of reverence, *to reverence, honour*, etc., and is not here to be interpreted in the sense of being afraid, which would have required the preposition מִן before the object in such a case as the present.

10.—*The men were greatly afraid.*—When they heard from Jonah that his God was such a mighty one—who had made the heavens and the dry land— they were afraid and said: "What hast thou then done?" He had told them that he cherished feelings of reverence towards that great and mighty God; they asked him therefore what sin he had committed, or wherewith he had offended Him to bring upon himself His anger.—*For he had told them.*—Upon their question "What hast thou then done?" he answered them, that he was fleeing from the presence of the Lord.

11.—*Groweth more and more tempestuous.*—Lit.: *going and storming*, meaning to go on, increase, become more and more tempestuous, a common idiom in Hebrew. Comp. Exod. xix., v. 19; 1 Sam. ii., v. 26, xvii., v. 41; Esther ix., v. 4; Prov. iv., v. 18.

"I know it is on my account this great tempest
"is upon you."
13. Nevertheless the men rowed hard to regain the
land; but they could not, for the sea grew more
14. and more tempestuous against them. And they
cried unto the Lord, and said: "O Lord! let us
"not perish, we beseech thee, for this man's life;
"and lay not innocent blood to our charge: for
"Thou art the Lord, Thou doest as it pleaseth
15. thee." And they took up Jonah, and threw him
into the sea; and the sea ceased from its raging.
16. Then the men feared the Lord greatly, and offered
a sacrifice unto the Lord, and made vows.

12.—*For I know.*—I am not worthy to live; throw me overboard. God will not quiet the storm, till I am cast out of the ship.

13.—*The men rowed hard.*—They were unwilling to proceed to this extremity, and they wished, if possible, to save his life. חתר *to dig*, or *break forcibly through anything*, is strongly expressive of the great effort made by the seamen to avoid sacrificing the life of Jonah.

14.—An affecting prayer for pagans to present to the true God! —נפשׁ, *life*, means here *life that is taken away*, having דם נקיא, *innocent blood*, corresponding to it in the following clause. Comp. Deut. xix., v. 21; II Sam. xiv. v. 7. Coverdale, well as to the sense, "this man's *death*." The reference is not to anything that Jonah had done, but to what they were about to do to him.—דם על נתן *to give blood upon*, means the charge with murder. The sense is, let us not be found guilty of killing an innocent person. In the concluding words of the verse, they refer the whole affair to the mysterious providence of God. They had not been brought into their present circumstances by any conduct of their own; nor could they account for the guilt of Jonah, since he was chargeable with no act of immorality. Yet he was the object of Divine displeasure.

15.—*They took up Jonah.*—They now proceed calmly, though with great reluctance, to act in accordance with what they had been led to regard as the will of the Most High.

16.—*They offered a sacrifice.*—According to the Rabbins, Grotius, and some others, they did not actually offer a sacrifice, but only purposed to do it before the Lord, *i.e.*, at Jerusalem; but it is more natural to conclude that they sacrificed some animal that was on board, and vowed that they would present greater proofs of their gratitude when they returned from their voyage. Michaelis thinks they intended to perform their vows when they reached Spain.

CHAPTER II.

1. Now God had appointed a great fish to swallow Jonah; and Jonah was in the bowels of the fish three days and three nights.

1.—*God had appointed.*—It has been supposed by some that the fish here spoken of was created at the moment for the purpose of swallowing Jonah; but there is nothing in the original word מִנָּה which at all suggests the idea of creation or production. It properly signifies to *appoint, order, arrange,* and the like, so that all that can be legitimately inferred from its use in this place, is, that in the providence of God, the animal was brought to the spot at the precise time when Jonah was thrown into the sea, and its instrumentality was wanted for his deliverance. In other words, it was the result of a special pre-arrangement in the Divine plan, according to which the movements of all creatures are regulated, and rendered subservient to the purposes of God's universal government.

On the subject of the fish itself various opinions have been broached. Hermann von der Hardt would have it to be nothing more than *an inn,* with the sign of "The Whale," into which Jonah was received, after having been cast on shore! Less proposed the theory of a ship with this name, which happened to be close by, and rescued the prophet; while Thaddeus supposed that, on being thrown out of the vessel, he lighted upon a large fish, on which he rode for the time specified, and was at last cast on shore!—Till the time of Bochart it was commonly supposed to have been the *balœna,* or whale properly so called. With much ingenuity that learned author endeavours to prove, that it must have been the *carcharias,* or dog-fish, which, though not the size of a whale, yet has so large a gullet, and so capacious a stomach, that one of them has been found to contain a warrior, clad in all his armour. (Bochart, Herioso p. ii., lib. iv., Cap. xii.) Others have supposed that it was *a shark,* a species of fish abounding in the Mediterranean, exceedingly voracious, and in the belly of which whole men have been found. (See Müller, Vollständige Natursystem des Ritters Karl von Linné," Theil III., Seite 68; P. du Tertre, Histoire des Antilles, II., 203; Lacepède, Hist. des Poissons, I., 189; Stark, Animal Kingdom, p. 305; Bloch, Hist. des Poissons, iv., 31., § xi.)—The Scriptures leave it entirely undecided to what species of marine animals the fish belonged; merely stating that it was a דָּג גָּדוֹל *a great fish,* one sufficiently large for the occasion. Much has been written to relieve the transaction of the miraculous; but that it is physically possible for a human subject, which has been accustomed for years to breathe the vital air, to exist without respiration, or upon the foul air of a fish, for the length of time here specified, has never been proved. The position of Aben Ezra is the only one that can, with any consistency be maintained: "No man has the power of living in the bowels of a fish for a single hour, how much less for such a number of hours, except by the operations of a miracle." The transaction was, as Kimchi observes, *one of the miracles.*

2. And Jonah prayed to the Lord his God, from the
3. bowels of the fish, And said:
"I cried because of my distress
"Unto the Lord, and He answered me;
"From the interior of hades I cried out:
"Thou heardest my voice.

2.—*And Jonah prayed.*—When the three days and nights were passed, Jonah uttered this devotion. The word ויתפלל, he *prayed*, includes *thanksgiving*, not prayer only. Comp. I Sam., ii., v. 1, where the canticle of Hannah is all one thanksgiving, without a single petition. Some of the Rabbins, Hezel, and others, would argue from the use of מן, *from, out of*, and not ב, *in*, before מעי, that the prayer of Jonah was not presented while he was in the belly of the fish, but *after his deliverance;* but this interpretation is justly rejected both by Aben Ezra and Kimchi. The preposition marks the place from which he directed his thoughts to the Most High. Comp. Ps. cxviii., v. 5, cxxx., v. 1.—*Of the fish.*—The final ה in הדגה is *not* feminine, as has been supposed, and upon which assumption some Rabbins have built the theory, that a still larger female fish swallowed that in which Jonah was preserved; but the ה paragogic, which corresponds to the status emphaticus of the Aramaic, and is designed to strengthen the termination. For other instances in which it is added, at the same time that the noun takes the article, comp. החרסה, Judges xiv., v. 18; המותה Ps. cxvi., v. 15. The position of the accent is of no account.

3.—That the language of our prophet here, is in part borrowed from the Psalms, appears from the following comparison:

Psalm cxx., v. 1:	Jonah ii., v. 3:
אל־ יהוה בצרתה לי קראתי ויענני	קראתי מצרה לי אל יהוה ויענני
Psalm xlii., v. 8:	Jonah ii., v. 4:
כל משבריך וגליך עלי עברו	כל משבריך וגליך עלי עברו
Psalm xxxi., v. 23:	Jonah ii., v. 5:
ואני אמרתי נגרזתי מנגד עיניך	ואני אמרתי נגרשתי מנגד עיניך
Psalm xlix., v. 2:	Jonah ii., v. 6:
באו מים עד נפש	אפפוני מים עד נפש
Psalm cxlii., v. 4:	Jonah ii., v. 8:
בהתעטף עלי נפשי	בהתעטף עלי נפשי
Psalm xxxi., v. 7:	Jonah ii., v. 9:
השמרים חבלי־ שוא	משמרים חבלי־שוא
Psalm iii., v. 9:	Jonah ii., v. 10;
ליהוה הישועה	ישועתה ליהוה

4. "Thou didst cast me into the deep,
"Into the midst of the seas,
"So that the current surrounded me;
"All Thy breakers and Thy billows passed over me,
5. "So that I thought:
"'I am cast out from before Thine eyes,'—
"Yet I will look again towards Thy holy temple.
6. "The waters press around me to the very life;
"The abyss encompasseth me;
"The weed is bound to my head.
7. "I went down to the very roots of the mountains,

On the supposition that Jonah was familiar with the Psalms, it was very natural for him to incorporate sentences taken from them with his own language, just as we frequently do in extempore prayer, without thinking of the portion of Scripture from which they are derived.

4.—*Into the deep.*—Before מצולה, supply ב.—*The current.*— נהר, commonly used of a *river*, but here it is to be understood of the strong *current* or *stream* of the sea, which flows like a river. There is no foundation for the opinion of Aben Ezra and Kimchi, that it was intended to describe the confluence of the waters of a river with those of the sea.

5.—*From before Thine eyes.*—To be *before the eyes of the Lord*, means to be the object of his special notice and care. Jonah had fled from the Divine presence in Canaan, but now he feels that he is expelled even from the abodes of life, and cut off, as it were, from the regard of that Providence which watches over the children of men. Still he does not abandon himself to despair. He confidently expects to be restored to the enjoyment of his privileges in the temple at Jerusalem, and there to render thanks to God for his deliverance. We have here a sudden transition from fear to hope. After all, however, I do not think the Masoretic punctuation quite correct here. Would it not be more in accordance with the context to read אך *ech, how*, instead of אך *ach, yet?* The rendering would then be: "How shall I be able to look again towards Thy holy temple?"

6.—*To the very life.*—Lit.: *to the very soul, i.e.*, the animal life; meaning to the extinction of life.—*The weed.*— סוף, is the *alga* or *weed*, which abounds at the bottom of the sea, and from which the Arabian Gulf takes the name of ים־סוף, *the sea* of *weeds*. Kimchi explains it by גומא, the papyrus, or bulrush. Gesenius refines too much when he attaches to חבוש in this place the idea of binding round the head like a turban. Assuredly Jonah had no such idea in his mind. He rather describes how he felt, as if entangled by the sedge or weeds through which he was dragged.

7.—*To the very roots.*—The hidden rocks, which the mountains push out, as it were, into the sea, and in which they end. Such

"The earth—her bars are shut behind me for ever;—
"Yet Thou didst raise up my life from that depth,
"O Lord, my God!
8. "When my soul was overwhelmed within me,
"I remembered the Lord;
"And my prayer came unto Thee,
"Into Thy holy temple.
9. "They that regard lying vanities,
"Forsake their Benefactor;
10. "But as for me, unto Thee will I sacrifice
"With a voice of thanksgiving;
"What I have vowed I will fulfil;
"Salvation belongeth to the Lord."

hidden rocks extend along the whole length of that coast. "The road is very dangerous; for the bottom is a mere bank of rocks, which extend the whole length of the coast. It is thought that the sharp rocks which pierce to the surface of the sea are the remains of the Isle of Paria, mentioned by Pliny, v. 31." Mislin, Les Saints Lieux., II., 137.—*The earth.*—הָאָרֶץ is emphatically put in the nominative absolute, as the object to which the affections of the prophet still clung. He was expelled from it, as from a habitation, and its bars had been shut behind him, so that he could not return. —*Her bars are shut.*—The verb סָגַר is obviously implied. Jonah adds "for ever," to express the impossibility of his ever again reaching the dry land, by any effort of his own.

8.—The prophet now describes the circumstances of distress to which he was reduced, his application to God, and the answer which he received to his prayer. The composition of this and the following verses, belongs to a period subsequent to his deliverance; yet while describing his condition, he occasionally directs his language to God, towards whom, as his deliverer, his thoughts naturally rose.—*Overwhelmed.*— From עָטַף, *to cover, to involve in darkness, to overwhelm.*

9.—*Forsake their benefactor.*—חסדם Lit.: *their mercy* or *goodness;* by mentonymy for their benefactor, *i.e.*, God, the author and source of all goodness: the supreme God. Comp. Ps. cxliv., v. 2, where David calls God his חסד "chesed." The word proper signifies *kindness* or *benignity*, and most appropriately designates Him who is good to all, and whose tender mercies are over all His works. The Syriac reads *Thy mercy*, which Green on this authority alone, admits into the text!

10.—Deeply sensible of the merciful interposition of God on his behalf, Jonah now solemnly engages to give expression to his feelings of gratitude by accompanying his presentation of sacrifice with a song of praise, and faithfully performing his vows, of which we may

11. And the Lord commanded the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land.

CHAPTER III.

1. And the word of the Lord came to Jonah a
2. second time, saying: "Arise, go to Nineveh,
"that great city, and make the proclamation
3. "to it which I order thee." And Jonah arose,
and went to Nineveh, according to the word
of the Lord. Now Nineveh was a great city

conclude, the execution of his commission to go to Nineveh formed none of the least. The ה in ישועתה is in intensive. Comp. Ps. iii., v. 3. In both passages the deliverance is ascribed to God as its author, as the ל in ליהוה imports.

11.—Green and Boothroyd, on mere conjecture, remove this verse from its present position, and insert it before the hymn. Such a transposition is unnecessary, and a perversion of the passage.—*It vomited out Jonah.*—It is not stated where the prophet was cast on shore, but in all probability it was somewhere on the coast of Palestine. According to some, the fish carried him, during the three days and three nights down the Mediterranean, and through the Archipelago, and the Propontis, into the Euxine sea, and deposited him on the south coast, at the nearest point to Nineveh!

1.—*And the word of the Lord.*—Jonah, delivered from the whale, doubtless went up to Jerusalem to pay his vows. Perhaps he hoped that God would be content with this his punishment and repentance, and that He would not again send him to Nineveh. He seems to have had some settled home, perhaps again at Gath-hepher. For God tells him (v. 2) "Arise, go."

2.—*Arise, go.*—Jonah might have seemed unworthy to be again inspired by God. But *whom the Lord loveth, He chasteneth;* whom He chasteneth, He loveth.

3.—*And Jonah arose and went.*—Before when God said those same words *he arose and fled;* now *he arose and went.* He was now as ready to obey, as before to disobey.—*A great city even to God.*—This phrase has been variously explained. Some, with Kimchi, deem it merely a superlative form; Gesenius construes the ל instrumentally, *great through God, i.e.*, through His favour. Others consider it to be equivalent to לפני אלהים, *before God*, Gen. x., v. 9. Thus the Targum, קדם יי. I agree with this last interpretation, as it was most natural to refer the size of a city of which the Hebrews could form no adequate conception, to the Divine estimation. I have therefore rendered the words literally, as our preposition *to* is often used to note opinion or estimate.

4. even to God, of three days' journey. And Jonah began to enter the city, one day's journey, and he proclaimed, and said: "Yet forty days, and "Nineveh shall be overthrown."
5. And the men of Nineveh believed in God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them, even to the least of them.
6. And the subject reached the king of Nineveh, and he rose from his throne, and put off his robe, and covered himself with sackcloth, and sat

It has been alleged against the antiquity of the Book, that the writer uses the substantive verb in the past tense, when describing here the size of Nineveh, as if the city had been destroyed before his time; but the past tense is evidently employed for the simple purpose of preserving uniformity in the style of the narrative, and as De Wette observes, *bedeutet nichts.*

4.—It is impossible to determine how far Jonah penetrated into Nineveh, since it is probable that in making his announcement he would stop at different places, as the crowds might collect around him.

5.—*Believed in God.*—Perhaps the mariners spread the history of Jonah. They, therefore, believed that God, who avenged *his* disobedience, would avenge theirs. They believed perhaps, that God must have some great mercy in store for them, who not only sent his prophet so far from his own land to *them* who had never worshipped him, but had done such mighty wonders to subdue his prophet's resistance, and to make him go to them.—*Sackcloth.*—The usual attire of deep mourning. The sackcloth was a harsh garment, irritating and afflictive to the body.

6.—*And the subject reached.*—The whole account, viz., how this stranger, in strange austere attire, had come, what had happened to him before he came, etc. People are slow to carry to sovereigns matters of distress, in which they cannot help. This was no matter of peril from *man*, in which the counsel or energy of the king could be of use. Anyhow, it came to him at last. But when it came to him, he disdained not to follow the example of those below him. He was not jealous of his prerogative, but in common peril, acted as his subjects had, and humbled himself as they did.—*The king of Nineveh.*—Who the king of Assyria was at the time, is not certain. Pul, the first monarch of that empire mentioned by name in Scripture did not begin to reign till B.C. 769. Some are of opinion that it was Sardanapalus; if so, his repentance was the more remarkable, for according to the ancients he was proverbially notorious on account of his profligacy. "Et venere, et coenis, et plumis Sardanapali." (Juvenal, Sat. III.) It is said that he composed for his epitaph, "*Eat, drink, play; after death there is no pleasure.*"

7. in ashes. And a proclamation was made through Nineveh, by order of the king and his grandees, saying: "Let neither man nor beast, ox nor "sheep, taste anything, let them not feed, neither
8. "let them drink water. But let man and beast "be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily "unto God: and let them turn every one from "his wicked way, and from the violence which is
9. "in their hands. Who knoweth? God may turn "and repent, and turn away from his fierce "anger, that we perish not."
10. And God saw their works, that they turned from their wicked way, and God repented of the evil

7.—*By order of the king and his grandees.*—This is a hint of the political state of Nineveh, beyond what we have elsewhere. It was not then an absolute monarchy.—*Nor beast.*—The irrational animals cannot, through words, learn the anger of God; let them learn, through hunger that the infliction is from God. It was no arbitrary nor wanton nor careless act of the king of Nineveh to make the dumb animals share in the common fast. It proceeded probably from an indistinct consciousness that God cared for *them* also, and that *they* were not guilty.

8.—*Covered with sackcloth.*—Plutarch informs us that when Masistias, a Persian general, was slain, the horses and mules were shorn, as well as the Persians themselves.—*And cry.*—This most probably refers to the *men* of Nineveh.—*And from the violence.*—The Hebrews had a saying: "Whoso hath stolen a beam, and used it in building a great tower, must pull down the whole tower, and restore the beam to its owner," *i.e.*, restitution must be made at any cost. "He," they say, "who confesses a sin and does not restore the thing stolen, is like one who holds a reptile in his hands, who, if he were washed with all the water in the world, would never be purified, till he cast it out of his hands; when he has done this, the first sprinkling cleanses him."

9.—*Who knoweth.*—The Targum: "Whoever is conscious that there are crimes in his hands;" Kimchi: "He who knoweth the ways of repentance."

10.—*And God repented.*—God is anthropopathically said *to repent* when he changes his mode of procedure, or acts differently from what his promises or threatenings had given reason to expect. The threatening in this case having been conditional, was repeated on the performance of the implied conditions. To what extent the repentance of the Ninevites was genuine in its character, and how long the reformation of manners here specified lasted, we are not informed; but there is reason to fear it was of short continuance, for after their city had been besieged for three years by Arbaces

which he had said he would inflict upon them, and he inflicted it not.

CHAPTER IV.

1. But Jonah was exceedingly displeased and grieved.
2. And he prayed unto the Lord, and said: Ah! now Lord! was not this my word while I was yet in mine own country? Wherefore I anticipated it by fleeing to Tarshish, for I knew that Thou art a gracious and merciful God, long-suffering, and of great kindness, and repentant of
3. the evil. And now, O Lord! take, I pray thee, my life from me, for my death were better than
4. my life. And the Lord said: Art thou much grieved?

the Mede, it was taken and destroyed. Diod. Sic. II., 26, etc. Thus fell the ancient Assyrian dynasty, and gave place to that of the Medes, which continued till the time of Cyaxeres, when Nineveh, which had been rebuilt, was again destroyed, and finally ceased to be an imperial residence.

1.—*Grieved.*—חרה is here used, not in the sense of being *enraged* or *angry*, but in that of being the subject of *grief* or *sorrow*. Comp. I Sam. xv. v. 11; II Sam. vi., v. 8. Rashi: "He was grieved, for he said, they will now say that I am a false prophet."

2.—*My word.*—What I spake within myself, my cogitation. —*I anticipated.*—קדם is here taken in the sense of doing anything in order to anticipate another. Jonah acknowledges that he used all despatch in his attempt to leave Palestine. The description of the Divine goodness here given agrees verbally with that exhibited, Joel ii., v. 13. He recollected the numerous instances in which, instead of executing His threatenings, God had, in the exercise of His patience, borne with the guilty, and even interposed with illustrious acts of pardon; and he was afraid of compromising his character by announcing what he had reason to expect might never take place.

4.—*Art thou much grieved.*—Most modern versions improperly render: "Dost thou well?" or "is it right to be angry?" their authors not adverting to the fact that the Hiph. Infinitive of יטב is often used adverbially in the acceptation, *greatly, exceedingly, thoroughly*, or the like. See Deut. ix., v. 21, xiii., v. 15; II Kings xi., v. 18. In like manner the infinite form of היטבת לראות.

Kimchi: אם חרה לך מאד, Art thou *much* grieved? and adds: *As for* היטב, *it imports the strengthening of a subject.* The renderings: "Will grieving do thee any good?" and, "Does beneficence offend thee?" are totally to be rejected.

5. And Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made a booth for himself, and sat under it in the shade, till he should
6. see what would happen in the city. And the Lord God had appointed a ricinus plant, and he caused it to rise up over Jonah, to be a shade over his head, to deliver him from his affliction: and Jonah rejoiced exceedingly on account of the ricinus.
7. But God appointed a worm, when the morning rose the next day, and it injured the ricinus, so
8. that it withered. And it came to pass when the

5.—We cannot determine on what day Jonah abandoned his labours among the Ninevites, but it is evident from the conclusion of this verse, that it must have been before the lapse of the forty days specified in his announcements.

6.—*Ricinus plant.*—קִיקָיוֹן, *kikaion* (Ricinus Communis, Linn.), commonly known by the name of *Palma Christi*. The word is the same as the Egyptain KIKI, and the Talmudic *Kik*, with the Hebrew termination. In the Arabic it is called *El-Kheroa*, which is not to be confounded with *El-Karra*, the *cucurbita*. Our English rendering *gourd* is equally inappropriate. This plant is indigenious in India, Palestine, Arabia, Africa, and the east of Europe, and on account of its singular beauty is cultivated in gardens. It is a biannual, and usually grows to the height of from eight to ten feet. It is chiefly remarkable on account of its leaves, which are broad, palmate, and serrated, and divided into six or seven lobes. Only one leaf grows on a branch, but being large, sometimes measuring more than a foot, and spread out in the shape of an open hand with the fingers extended, their collective shade affords an excellent shelter from the heat of the sun. It is of exceedingly quick growth, and has been known in America to reach the height even of thirteen feet in less than three months. When injured it fades with great rapidity. See on verse 10, Celcii Hierobot., pt. ii., p. 273; Michaelis, Supplem. No. 2263; Rosenmüller, in the Biblical Cabinet, vol. xxvii. p. 125; Michaelis, Bibel Uebersetz., note on the passage, where there is a plate with an excellent representation of a ricinus. How much such a shrub, throwing its palmy branches over the small hut which the prophet had erected, must have contributed to his relief in the sultry environs of Nineveh, may easily be imagined, his joy is emphatically described in the last clause of the verse.—*Caused it to rise up.*—וַיַּעַל I take to be the apocopated future of Hiphil, having יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים for it nominative.

sun arose, that God appointed a sultry east wind, and the sun beat upon the head of Jonah, so that he fainted, and requested that he might die, for he said: My death were better than my life.
9. And God said unto Jonah: Art thou much
10. grieved on account of the ricinus? And he said: I am much grieved, even unto death. And the Lord said: Thou art affected on account of the ricinus, with which thou hadst no trouble, and which thou didst not rear, which came in a night,
11. and perished in a night: And I, I should not be affected on account of Nineveh, that great city,

8.—The רוח קדים, or *east wind*, is the sultry and oppressive wind which blows in the summer months across the vast Arabian desert, and produces universal languor and relaxation. It resembles the Sirocco, only is free from its dampness, and consequently more destructive in vegetation. Superadded, as in the present instance, to the heat of the morning sun, it is exceedingly oppressive.

10. — חוס, properly signifies *to be affected* by the sight of anything; hence to *feel concern* on account of it, to take pity or compassion. I have employed the passive form of our verb *to affect*, in order to present in the translation a word equivalent to that which is here used in the original. There seems no necessity for taking the Hebrew verb in two acceptations. The formula, אבד שבן־לילה היה ובן־לילה, lit.: *which was the son of a night, and perished the son of a night*, is obviously intended to express the extraordinary rapidity with which the ricinus put forth it leaves and afterwards withered. That the tree itself was instantaneously produced, cannot be proved from this mode of speech, any more than from the use of the verb מנה, verse 6; otherwise we should be obliged, for the sake of consistency, to maintain, that the whole tree was miraculously destroyed, and had entirely disappeared during the night. היה and אבד are strictly antithetical. But, as all that was required in the one case, was that the broad spreading leaves should wither, so as no longer to afford protection to Jonah, though the trunk remained; so all that was necessary in the other was to give to the tree which had been previously produced, such an extraordinary accelerated power of germination, that the leaves, which would otherwise have required some longer time to come to maturity, were brought to perfection in the course of a night.

11.—The peculiar force of the appeal lies in the immense number of rational creatures which must have perished had Nineveh been destroyed. Estimating the age of the children at about three years, and assuming them to have formed a fifth part of the population, which is the allowance generally made, we shall have six

in which are more than twelve times ten thousand human beings who cannot distinguish between their right hand and their left, and much cattle?

hundred thousand as the number of inhabitants. In order to enhance this number, and render it more affecting, that of the irresponsible children is estimated; and if this did not produce a suitable impression upon the mind of the prophet, the number even of irrational animals is adverted to, the latter being far superior in point of mechanism and utility to the shrub for which he was so much concerned.

There is something in the abrupt manner in which the Book closes which is highly calculated to produce its effect on the mind of a reflecting reader.

END OF THE BOOK OF JONAH.

OPINIONS OF THE PRESS ON

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